¶ The lyfe of prestes.

¶ This present treatyse concernynge the estate and lyfe of Chanons/prestes/clerkes/and mynystres of the church / was fyrst compyled in Latyne by the reuerend and deuoute father Dyonisius/ sometyme one of the Charterhouse in Ruremond / and taken and exemplifyed with great diligence out of an originall copy/ of which he wrote with his owne hande/and nowe agayne beynge diligently corrected / is translated into the Englyshe tonge/ vnto the honour of god/ and for the vtilite & soule helth of Clerkes / & other studentes of the same.

BIBLIOTECA NACIONAL

Cursyd is that mā which dothe the worke of god necglygently. This is wryten in the.xlviii.chapytre of the prophet Hieremye. God whose maiestie is incomparable / despiseth hym that is vndeuoute in his seruice / he abhorryth the sluggard / he defyeth the wycked and the necgligent / moreouer if the princes of this worlde loke for to be seruyd with due reuerēce & attendaūce / howe moch more then doth the lorde of all thynges (whose maiestie surely is infynite) wyll / commaunde / and require / that we shall serue hym with most principall diligence. The Apostle therfore gyueth vs moniciō sayeng in this wyse. Let vs serue god with feare & diligence. And in another place he exhortyth vs in this wyse. Laboure for your saluacion with feare / awe / and dread / for surely those thre thynges do cause dilygence / they induce vs vnto spirituall circumspection and distroy all necglygence accordynge vnto the sayenge of scripture: which is this. Let vs always walke circūspectly before god euermore fearyng.

leste we

leste we in any wyse do offende the pre-
sence of the almighty which beholdyth
all thynges. And lyke as feare of body
mouyth mannes mynde for to eschewe
peryll / euen so the feare of god causyth
vs to be circũspect in eschewyng synne.
Therfore as it is wrytten in the boke of
Ecclesiasticus/he that is without feare
maye not be iustefyed. And Salomon
sayth. The feare of god is a well of lyfe/
for to auoyde the ruyne of death/whiche
also sayth in another place/he that fea-
yth god is neglygent in nothyng. Un-
doubtydly this detestable negligence
which deseruyth malediction and euer-
lasting dampnacion/is most repugnaũt
and contrarie vnto holsome sollicitude /
and vertuos diligence. Seyng therfore
that the feare of god ingendryth dili-
gence/it must nedys folowe that a man
fearyng god shall in nothyng be negly-
gent / it is not without cause therfore
that Dauid the maker of psalmys sayd/
feare ye god all that be his sayncte s/for
they that feare hym shal want nothyng
which texte is to be vnderstanden of no
bonde or seruyle feare / but of such feare
as a chylde hath of his father. Seynge
therfore that the feare of god is so mych

necessary and holsome/we are wel war
ned in al the holy scripture/for to do all
our workes hauyng before our eyen the
feare of god/in so much that our laudes
wherby we prayse hym/ and our glorie
wherby we reioyced in hym/ ought to
be ioyned and haue a sent of this godly
feare/wherupon the holy prophete sayth
Serue ye the lorde with feare/& reioyse
in hym with dread. And certaynly to
serue god after this fashyon is a spe-
cyall gyfte of his grace/ accordyng vn-
to the sayenge of Job/ from the north
comyth gold/and from god comyth the
tymorous or fearful prayeyng/for syns
that all our ryghtuousnes (as the pro-
phete than wytnesseth) is in the syghte
of god/ but a ragge of a woman vnpu-
rified/and syns that in all our other ac-
tes and doynges there happen many di-
straccions and defautes/ ought we not
then to be always circumspecte/ ware/
diligent/and fearfull/lest euyn in doyng
our good workes/we offende our lorde/
and be reproued of that ryghtuos and
dreadfull iuge/for lyke as ye holy abbot
Agathon sayd. If god shuld lay agaynst
our manyfolde necgligence & defautes/
that we happen to incurre whyleft we

are

are prayeng / vndoubtidly we coude not be saued. wherfore let vs endeuour our selues with our hole power for to eschew this detestable necgligence in all our di uine seruyce / wherupon fryer Thomas in the. lui. question of his worke affir; meth that necgligence is the leuynge of due and conuenient busynes / and is di= rectely repugnaunt and contrarie vnto spirituall and vertuos diligence. And ly kewyse as diligence is a specyall poynt of wysedom / euen so is necgligence the chefe poynte of folyshenes / for as sayncte Isodore sayth. Negligens. i. non eligẽs And so is he yᵗ taketh none hede what is good nor what is euyll / therfore lyke as the takyng hede & chusynge of those thynges that are mete and necessarye for a good purpose / is an ayde of a wyse man / so the leuynge of and refusynge of such thynges is very necgligẽce / which is an acte of a fole / and comyth for lacke of good aduysement and discrecion / for if a man wolde inwardlye consider the authorite and worthynes of goddes byghe commaundement and his moste dreadfull and ryghtuos iugemente /

and there with all his rewarde and joye of them that obey hym/and the tormentes and paynes of them that dysobey hym/he shulde forthewith begynne to tremble/to abhorre negligence/and fynally to do the worke of god with all dyligēce. Notwithstandyng S. Gregorie wryteth that Securite is the mother of negligence. But yet there is a good Securite which procedeth from a good and a pure conscience wherof Salomon beryth wytnesse in the.xv.chapytre of his
Prouer.15. prouerbys sayeng. An assured mynde is as it were a continuall feste. There is another maner of Securite that is peryllous and comyth by reason of errour and lacke of aduysemēt or consideraciō. And that is where a mā takyth no hede of hymselfe when he is in ieoperdy/ne remembryth how he walketh i the myddes of the deuylles calthrop and snares nor that he offendyth god greuosly many wayes/nor caryth not whyther he deserue loue or hate/whyther he be predestinate and reproued/whyther he shal be sauyd or euerlastyngly condemnyd/of the which most dampnable and dangerous Securite it is mencioned in the
esia.7. vii.chapitre of Ecclesiastes in this wyse

There

There be of the wycked sorte that be as presumptuos as if they had wroughte iustely. So that this presumpcion and also neglygence growe and sprynge out of one rote / and so it makyth no great mattier though one synne haue his begynnynge of diuerse. Let vs therfore be verily wyse/diligent / carefull / and circumspecte / as creatures hauynge eyes on euery syde. And let vs set our hartes vpon oute iorney lyke as the prophete Aggeus monysheth vs / that we tourne not into the waye of synne/lest we sone after fall into the tormētys of hell. And let vs ponder and and fulfyll the sayeng of the scripture which is this: Blyssed is that man that is alway carefull / for I haue fearyd god lyke as I wold waues of the see ragynge vpon me. wherupon holy Job sayth these wordes. when I remembre god I am stryken with feare And also I was tymorous in all my workes lorde / for I knowe that thou wylt spare / when I offende / for a wyse man castyth the worst in all thynge/because he is vncertayn and in doute why ther his actes do procede of charite/and whither he please god or not And for as moch as it is a dreadfull thynge to fall

into the handes of the lyuyng god / the whiche is terrible in his iudgementes vpon the sonnes of men wherof also we are vncertayne and ignorant what he hath determined of vs in the secretes of his prescience or knowlege/and finally what shall becom of vs:let vs then (all negligence layed a part) studie to serue hym always with feare and reuerence/ and so doynge we may be sure to truste on the best/but if we do our worke negligently / we shall perysshe with those of whom the pphete speaketh. They that swarue from thy commaundementes shall perysshe. These thynges I haue touched brefly of the feare of god / and eschewynge negligence because in this worke folowyng I do intende specially to intreate of certayne matters concernyng the good cõuersacion and lyuyng of religious persones or regulars / that is to wyte of such as are bounde to any rule or order certayne / the state of whõ (alas the more pyte) is fallen to great ruyne and decaye / ye and in maner vnto extreme misorder/neuertheles amõg them there are many good men that with the dread of god are mouyd vnto perfyte liuyng. Amõg whom also there

are manye that I loue tendrely / the whyche haue oftentymes disclosyd vnto me the charite of theyr hartes / for whose sakys I haue wryten this boke / wherfore (by the grace and helpe of god) I shall touche this matter as groundly and as substancially as I can possyble.

The Table.

¶ Here ensuyth a table of the articles conteyned in the treatyse folowynge.

¶ Of the originall institution & fyrste begynnyng of religious or regulers persons. The fyrst article.

A confirmacion of thynges towched in the fyrste article / by the wordes of holy fathers & why mynysters of the churche are called clerkes. And wherfore theyr lyuynges be gyuen them. And whyther they maye lawfully haue propertie in goodes or no. The. ii. article.

¶ For what cõsyderacion all religious persones and clerkes / are principally bounde to lyue vertuously / gyuyng good example in chastite and humilite. The. iii. article.

¶ Of such thynges as regulars or religious men / and clerkes are specially bounden to obserue. The. iiii. article.

¶ why clerkes and regulars ought to were no weapon nother to fyght / nor vse to set or trymme theyr here / nor yet to be vsurers. The. v. article.

¶ For what cause regulars are bound especially to folow chastite of body / and clennes of mynd / & therfore they ought not to haunt the cloystres of nonnes / nor

nor entre in to theyr houses.

The.vi.article.

¶ Of sobrynes to be obseruyd of regulars and of all surfet ryot or dronkenes to be of them auoyded. The.vii.article

¶ Howe it is prohibyt to all clerkes & mynystres of the church to occuppe any marchaundyse/or to exercyse any temporall offyces or cheuyshaunce.

The. viii. article.

¶ For what cause clerkes regulars and other constituti in holy ordres ought to refrayn from mynstrelles/ Jesters/and dyssardes/tauerns/and cke/the play of cardes and dyse. The. ix. article.

¶ An instruction of diuers holsom consyderacions / wherby we may perceyue that all chrysten people/especially ministres of the church are bound to dispyse all vanite and superfluite of playes/disportes/and othe vayne delectacions.

The.x.article.

¶ Of conuenient appayrell for mynystres of the churche / especially of regulars and of theyr manyfolde excesse in garmentes / and of the desyre therof to be auoyded. The.xi. article.

¶ That in nowyse women may dwell with regulars or mynystres of ye church con-

constitute in holy ordres/except they be very olde & nere of kynred. The. xii. art.

¶ That chastite of body and clennes of hert do principally become prestes and regulars. The. xiii. article.

¶ Of the peryll and inprouidence of prestes and regulars dwellynge with women/ gatheryd out of the sayenges of many noble men. The. xiiii. article.

¶ Of the same matter it apperyth in the reuelacyons of S. Kateryne the virgyn of Senys and also of the holy wydowe S. Brigide. The. xv. article.

¶ That regulars & all men constitute in holy ordres are bound to be vertuous and holy gatheryd out of the sayeng of holy Dionisius. The. xvi. article.

¶ Of the qualite of regulars gatheryd out of the sayenges of S. Bernard. The. vii. article.

¶ Of the most strayte and terrible iudgement of god vpon clerkes had out of the wordes of glorious saynt Bernard. The. xviii. article.

¶ Howe they ought to pray/syng/and say the seruice of almyghty god. The. xix. article.

¶ whether descante may be commenda ble in diuine seruice/ & of certayne thyngs which ought to be eschewyd in song The. xx. article.

¶ Agaynste some that wolde be exeu-
sed from the obseruaunce of such thyn-
ges as regulars are specially bound to
do sayng that the dignite of the church
requyreth none other fashyō than hath
ben vsed in tymes passyd. The. xxi. ar.
¶ Of the daungere that is in pluralite
of benefices. The. xxii. article.
¶ Howe prestes and soch as are of the
clergye are boundē to kepehospitalite.
The. xxiii. article.
¶ whyther religious and spiritual per
sones that are able to fynde themselues
of theyr owne patrimonye and sub-
staunce / maye lawfully conuerte the
goodes of the churche vnto theyr owne
vses. The. xxiiii. article.
¶ what maner of man a prelate/dean/
or a hed and ruler of religious folke /
ought to be. The. xxv. article.
¶ Agaynst pryde & excesse in buyldyng
The. xxvi. article.
¶ Of certayne auncient lawes for the
annullyng of pluralitees of benefyce/in
the which no dispensaciō is admyttable
as moche as concernyth the naturall
lawe of them. The. xxvii. article.
¶ An exhortation vnto all clerkes & re-
ligious men. The. xxviii. article.
¶ Thus endyth the Table.

The lyfe

¶ Of the originall institution and fyrste begynnyng of religious / and reguler persones.

¶ The fyrste article.

THe holy euāgelist Luke in the foruth chaytre of the Actes of the Apostles declaryth / howe in the fyrste begynnyng of the churche (the holy ghost beynge sent from aboue) the vniuersall congregacion of faythfull people in Iherusalem dyd lyue in comen / hauyng no properte in any thynge. In those dayes substaūce was deuyded to euery man accordyng to theyr necessyte the which lyfe endured among them so long as the blyssed Apostles were there and rulyd them as faythfull people / yet truely whan the Apostles with that deuoute James the lesse (at that tyme beynge president of the church) were from them departed / yet notwithstandynge that most deuoute and feruent lyuynge in comen for a certayne space enduted. But after what beleuers in Chrystes fayth beganne to encrease thorughe out

out all Jury/Galylee/and Samarie/ & many thousandes began to be regenerate in Christe/than could not that lyfe in comyn be well obserued of all men. The great feruour also of theyr fyrst deuotion began to vanyshe awaye. And the hotenes of the bloud of our sauyour Christ began in ꝓcesse of tyme to ware colde in the hartes of the more parte of men. In so much that the most parte of such faythfull people that were conuertyd of the Jewes as of the paynymys to obteygne a properte in goodes to be contentyd to be obedient vnto theyr rulers. But for all that many callynge to theyr remembraunce theyr fyrste deuocion and conuersacion/beyng inflamyd by the inspyrate operation of the holy ghost aboue/with a great hote and feruent loue of perfectiō and pouerte/toke vpon them agayne that indifferent lyfe in comen. And ferther they dyd renewe the institucyons of the Apostles/in the whiche to the entente they myght the more frely and spedyely procede/they seueryd themselfe from the other faythfull people of god/and began to inhabite in suburbes and other secreate and solitary places/lyuynge not onely in

comen

comen with theyr substaunce/but also absteynynge from maryage corporally forsakynge theyr parentes and kynsfolk/ledyng theyr lyuys vnder holy obedience accordyng to the gostly counsell of our sauyour Christ. After which fasshyon the religious lyfe had his fyrste begynnynge/as Cassianus out of the wordes of a certayn Abbot/callyd Piamon in the secound volume of collatiōs shewyth at large. And as the same man wytnessyth in the secounde boke of the rulys of holy fathers howe in Alexandria certayne weldisposyd regular persons were institute and ordeyned by the holy euangelyst Marke/which dyd not onely lyue after the institucyons of the Apostles in comyn/but they addyd ther unto moche more and hyer deuocion as abstinēce with other colde hard & peynfull lyfe euermore gyuen to prayer and contemplacyon. In so moch that aswel the Jewes as paynymys dyd meruayle therat. They were also so incessauntly gyuen bothe nyght and day to redynge and also to hande labour that scantly the secound or thyrde day the appetyte of meate came in theyr remembraunce. Furthermore that thyng that holy Je-

rome

come in the boke of noble men shewyth & agreeyth with the same sayenge thus. The euangelyst Marke the fyrst preacher of the fayth of Christ vnto the people of Alexandria / dyd institute and ordeyne a church there where so great lernyng and chastite of lyfe was / to the entent that he myght prouoke the vniuersall folowers of Christe to his example. And further he sayd yt Philo the moste eloquent of the Jewes which occuppyed hymselfe in the prayse and laude of our faythfull people as it apperyth in the boke that he wrote of the fyrste churche at the euangelyst Marke at the cyte of Alexandria / he affyrmyd also that suche christen beleuers were not onely there / but also in many other prouynces / callyng theyr houses and mansion places / monasteries / wherby it apperyth that such was the church of ye fyrst beleuers in Christe / which we call now monkes. And such as the holy euangeliste Luke doth reherse that were fyrst beleuers in Jerusalem. Also the same Philo made a certayne boke of the lyfe contemplatyue / wherin he sayth / that the fyrst disciples of the euangeliste Marke were euer gyuen to contemplacion & prayer.

Furthermore of the treuth of this matter / ye shall haue more certayne knowlege of the instruccio of holy Dionisius in his boke de Ecclesiastica hierarchia / For there the same holy man describeth howe the maner and approued custome of consecration of monkes in the tyme of the Apostles / and fyrste foundation of the church was very deuoute. Moreouer suche as seuered themselfe from the companye of faythfull people that obteyned propertie of goodes ben deuyded into two kyndes. For some toke vpon them the profession of religyous and solitary lyfe. And some truely continued among secular men / & dyd humble seruyce vnto to the congregacion in the churche / lyuynge vnder the gouernaunce of holy byshopes. For why the deuoute bishops that were at that tyme callyd and ioyned vnto them deuoute faythfull and seruyd people that were they? houshold seruauntes or such well dyspoted persones / as were dwellynge nyght to they? houses / & suche as ladde that holy lyfe in comyn / accordynge to the institucions of the Apostles before rehersed with many deuoute addicions and obseruaunce / Whiche to them were

shewyd

shewyd by holy byshops/whose clerkes they were. And applyed themselfe to the laudes of god as byshopes dyd/ rysynge at mydnyght or sone after duely to celebrate theyr diuine seruyce/ that ought to be done in the nyght and eke in the mornynge. Notwithstandynge they dyd not make that solemne vowes which be requisite to euery religious as monkes do now adayes. For why they seme to be/but the sprynges and begynners of the lyfe and callyng of regulars which whan it chaũsyd that they could not all inhabite with holy byshoppes/ they were distributed into other deuout places that be callyd colleges beyng vnder the gouernaunce of byshoppes/ and hauynge a meane ruler callyd a deane/ which places also were namyd monasteryes/ and had in them one fraytour/ and one dortour. They were at that tyme dilygently gyuen to diuyne obseruaunce and obedience/ vtterly auoydynge all poyntes of vnclennes and incontinencie. wherupon Pope Clement in his fourthe Epystle wrote vnto his well belouyd bretherne and vnto his scholyfelowys of Jerusalem

dwellynge to gether with his welbe-
louyd brother and byshop after thi-
ner folowyng. Clement the byshop sen-
dyth you greetynge. &c. A lyfe in comyn
to all men / and especyally to clerkes is
very necessary. And principally to them
that desyre to be militaũt in the church
of god without rebuke or shame. And
such as do coueyte to folowe the lyfe of
the Apostles and theyr disciples. And
for this cause we commaunde you to
folowe and obey theyr doctrine and ex-
ample. Furthermore for this purpose
saint Jerome sayd vnto one Nepotian/
as hereafter folowyth. A clerke he saith
ought so to behaue hymselfe / that god
may bothe possesse hym. And that he
may possesse god. And in so muche that
it is wryten. God is my part / he ought
to possesse nothyng but god onely. wher
fore if he possesse any thynge besydes
god he shall not haue his part with god
as for exaumple. If a man possesse gold
syluer / possessions / or other householde
stuffe / it behouyth not ꝑ our lord shuld
be comparyd to suche partes. Of this
matter in lyke maner in the. xii. chapi-
tre of the decrees more euidently it ap-
peryth / wherupon therof wryteth sayn

Jerome

Jerome agayne/sayeng thus. There be two kyndes & maners of Christen people/wherof one is that maner of people that be onely set and applyed to diuine seruyce and gyuen to contemplacion & prayer and suche as thynke it most conuenient to refrayne from the trobylous encomberaũce of temporall and wordly thynges / as clerkes and other deuoute and dedicate people to god which beyng contentyd with a pore and symple lyuynge/bothe of sustynãce and also clothyng hauynge no properte of goodes amonge them / but vsyng all thynge in comen.

¶ Hereafter folowyth the confirmacion of the foresayd lyfe in comen out of sayenges of holy fathers and why they be callyd clerkes. And wherfore they haue stypendes gyuen to them to fynd them. And whether they may lawfully haue properties of goodes or no.

The secound article.

The holy doctour and prelate Isidorus in the seuenth boke of his Ethymologyes dyscussyth this worde clerke in this maner of wyse. I suppose that it is callyd clergye / and that they be callyd clerkys / because S.

Mathie (which was fyrste ordeyned by the Apostles) cam and was elected vnto his dignite by castyng of loltys/tyns whiche tyme persones within holy ordres haue by callyd Clerici/in Englysh Clerkys (and who sayth) men callyd vnto spirituall dignite by the lotte of goddes wyll/ for this worde Cleros is asmoch to say in Englyshe as a lot of heritage. And therfore they are callyd clerici or clerkys/ bycause they are of the lot & inheritaunce of god/or els bycause they haue god to theyr lot & inheritaũce or bycause god hath his lot & iheritaũce in them. But generally all such are callyd clerkys that ministre & do seruyce in the church of Christ/whose names & degrees be such. Benet/colet/subdecane/decane/preste & bishop. And furthermore as Gratianus wytnessyth the degrees of the hyer and lower sorte of prestes in the newe testamẽt toke his begynnyng immediatly from Christ/ whiche fyrste ordeyned the. xii. Apostles as chyefe & hyeghest prestes. And the threscore and xii. disciples as lower prestes. But he chose the blessyd Peter to be his principall and hed preste. In so moch as he delyueryd vnto hym the kays of the kyngdom of heuyn for al them & byfore all them. And Christ of hymselfe beyng

callyd Petra (whiche is a very stone or rocke) gaue vnto hym the name of Peter. The Apostles folowynge the same fashyon / in euerye cyte ordeyned bothe prestes & byshopes. Also we rede & fynd that the decanes were ordeyned by the Apostles. But other inferior ordres as benet/colet / subdecane & other / in processe of tyme were institute by ye church wherupon (as Raymundus/Joannes/Ulricus/and other do testify) temporall goodes & possessiōs were therfore by the lay people gyuē vnto the church/& that forbycause that secular men haue no leyser to cōtinue and euermore apply them selfe to prayer & diuine seruyce/they beynge minystres & clerkes of the church/ shuld supply ye rhmes of the lay people in prayeng/minystring/& satisfyeng for them by whose almesdede & reward they be found & vpholden/but now in cōclusyon as it dyd appere / not onely in the tyme of the fyrst beginning of ye church but also many yeres afterward/that prestes & regulars myght in no wyse haue properte of goodes/but vsyd thēselfe to one fraytour & one dortour/which afterward by dispensaciō or otherwyse was chaūgyd after/such tyme as the church fell to ley moste lamentable greatly bewaylyng ruyne & decay both in the hede

and also in the membres of the church. The which we haue great nede to pray to almyghty god / that he of his goodes wolde vouchesauke to restore vnto the olde moste laudable ordre and maner. For why / howe many maner of abhominable vyces do and dayly wyll tyse and spryng by the reason of the lacke of lyuynge in comen/in one frayture/and one doctour/it is more euidētly shewyd by experience / than any tonge can expresse.

¶ For what cause regulars are bound to lyue very vertuously full of good example chast and meke.

The thyrd article.

LIke as the law of the gospell was to vs delyuerȳd by the only begotē sonne of god / the lawe of charite & vertue / the lawe also of all perfection/ techynge vs to despyse and contempne all fleshely and worldly thynges & only to be affectyonate & euermore desyrous of spirituall/godly / and heuenly thynges/incessantly gyuē to the euerlastyng and immutable god with a pure and feruent harte and mynde. Euyn so all christē people especially aboue all other nations in the worlde ought to be chast

table

table / mercyfull / ghostly / holy / full of good example / patient / meke / chaste / sobre and perfect / and otherwyse they are not worthy to be callyd the christen people of Christ. It is not sufficient for the to folowe Christe by fayth onely / but it is very necessary to the helth & holsome callyng of a christen man to folowe his lorde god Jesus Christe / by the due obseruaunce of his commaundementes by exercyse of vertue / and by suche maner of lyfe as shall please god. As our lorde and sauyour hymselfe knowledgyth / sayenge thus. wherfore say ye vnto me lorde / lorde / doyng not that thyng that I commaunde you / wherby it may be perceyued that who so euer transgressyth the preceptes of god / vaynly & vnworthyly namyth hym lorde. For the same purpose thus he sayeth agayne. Euery man that sayeth vnto me lorde / lord / shall not entre into the kyngdome of heuen / but he that dothe the wyll of my father that is in heuē. Also he saieth agayne in this maner. They that be the people of Christ that is to say pertaynyng to Christ as his true seruaūtes and mynystres haue mortifyed and punyshed theyr flesshe with abstinence

from vice and concupiscence. Therfore
christen men are bound to lyue after the
fashyon of Christe / that is to wyte / to
imitate and folowe christ in all charite /
humylite / patience / sobrenes / and chas-
tite / or els they be callyd christen men
the more to theyr damnacion. And for
that cause the Apostle Johan sayth in
this wyse. who so sayth that he wyl re-
mayne in Christe / hym behouyth to
walke as Christ walkyd. Beside this /
howe bitterly holely and purely a man
ought to obey and serue god / it is clere-
ly expressyd in the sayeng of the Apostle
James shewing thus / who so euer hath
fulfyllyd and performyd all the law / of-
fendyng but in one poynte he is iudged
guilty in the hole. Behold therfore how
narow the way of helth is / whā for one
worde we suffer eternall damnacion.
And as the trewth wytnessyth / he that
callyth his brother foule / shalbe guilty
of the paynes of hell. In lykewyse he
that sklaundryth one of these innocētes
receyuyth the horryble tormentes of
hell / the same lordes opinion. And also
he that offendyth one of the lytyll ones
that beleuen in men / it is requisyte that
a mylstone be hanged about his necke /

and

and so to be drowned in the bottome of the sea. Moreouer the maker of our law commaundyd all men that beleuen in hym to do as he sayth hereafter folowynge. Loue your enemyes/do good vnto them that hate you/and pray for them that doo persequute and sklander you. Whose hauyng thynges truely and with many other lyke belonge to euery sayth full christē man. Furthermore the hyer in estate and degree that a man be/the more and greater rewardes that his charite is to haue so moch the more is he bound to a vertuose lyfe for this. The more to any man is gyuen: the more of hym is alsyd agayne. Therfore who so be a regular/he is not onely bounde to the precepts of the lawe in the gospell before touched: but also to these thynges that are especially to regulars enioyned. And verily such as be not onely regulars/but constitute in any maner of holy ordre/are bounde besydes the thynges afore rehersed/vnto suche thynges as is commaunded to all them that be constitute in the same ordre/wherfore if he be a prelate or a pastoure/that is to sayn a feder of

christen

christē people with ghostly fode/or that he hath taken vpon hym the cure and charge of soules/thā he is surely bound to many more hyer thynges thā defore expressyd.

Nowe seyng therfore it is sayd that the ministres of the churche and regulars be therfore callyd clerkes / for because they be especially the lot/parte/or heritage of god / as men onely dedicate and deputed to diuine seruice than it is open vnto vs / that they are bounde to lyue so excellently yᵗ theyr inuisyble aduersaries may not obteyne any right/or dominiō in them / of the godly honour/ but that all tymes with a substanciall & pure fidelite they may perteygne to god And agayn it is sayd that tēporal rētes were assygned by the lay people vnto the clerkes and regulars / to the entent that they shuld not onely minystre vnto almyghty god for theyr owne welthe & preseruacion / but also in the place and stede of the lay people: there they shulde pray and ministre/and also pacifye and reconsyle that ryghtwyse iudge not onely to themselfe / but also to them by whose stypendes they lyue. They are bounde to reconsyle themselfe & agayne

to come

to come ſ the fauour of god/if ſomtyme they fortune to leſe it. And alſo of ryght they ought to aply. And intētyfly gyue themſelfe to the laude of god in theyr prayer and ſeruyce/bothe for them ſelfe and alſo for theyr foundars and benefactours. wherby it apperyth howe purely and vertuouſly they are bounde to lyue/that by the reaſon of the fulnes of theyr vertue and the abundaunce of theyr meryt they maye helpe & ſuccour theyr frendes and neyghbours as well on lyfe as ded. Therfore ſuch regular & ordinary houres with other prayers/ laudes/ and pſalmodyes/ wherto they are bounde ought of them to be done & performed with great diligence. And no dought but they ought to behaue them ſelfe as worthy minyſtres/and men contentyd to do the ſeruyce of god/pronoūcyng it diſtinctly ſolitarily and deuoutely. Otherwyſe they haue no ryght in any goodes or ſubſtaunce of the churches/ nother in the heritage of Chriſte/ nor yet in the ſtypendes or rewardes of the ſouldiars of god. As the profunde lernyd doctour Guilhelmus Pariſienſis wytneſſyth in many places. Ulricus alſo in his boke namyd ſumma. Raymundus

mundus/Durandus/Joannes/ & other be of the same opinion.

¶ Of such thynges as are specially enioyned to regulars.

¶ The. iiii. ar.

LIke as Isidorus sayth that clerkes be namyd by this greke worde cleros/which is in Englyshe a lot for bycause they be especially of the lot of god/& god is theyr heritage. Ryght so these regulars be called of these greke word/canon/in Latyne/regula/in Englysh a rule. And as Gratiaunce sayth it callyd a rule/for that that it ledyth directly: nor at any tyme waueryth asyde or as some men sayen/it is callyd a rule for that that it rulyth or gouernyth. And shewyth the very fashion of lyuing directely: or els for bycause it ordryth & correctyth that thyng that is euyll disposyd or out of the way. Clerkes therfore be namyd regulars forbycause they be bound to lede there lyfe dyrectly and in good rule/auoydyng all inclinacion to vyce. And clerly passynge by pathes of vertue/vnto blyssydnes/accordynge vnto the institucions of holy fathers to

them

them before ordeyned. But although of the generall counsell / by hyghe bysshopes / doctours / and noble prelates. As Jerome / Augustine / Gregory / and Isidore many thynges were institute to be obserued of the regulars which in the decree therof made be towchyd and expressyd / yet notwithstandyng these preceptes (as many as be sufficient for our purpose) are compendiously gatheryd together in the begynnynge of the thyrde boke of decretalles / wherin amonges other it is this sayd and commaundyd. Clerkes that bere weppyn and be vsurers / let them be excommunicate. If any of the clerkes vse to set theyr bussches or here / let them be accurst. If any of the clerkes do presumptuously haunt the monasteryes of nonnes without a manyfest and reasonable occasion / hyrst he shalbe correctyd by the byshop / and if he wyll not ceasse / he shall clerly be discharged of his office in the churche. Ferther Innocentius the thyrde in a generall counsell sayd that. To the entent that both the actes and condicions of clerkes maye be better reformyd. And that they all may lyue contynently and chastly / especyally suche as ben

consti-

constitute in holy ordres vtterly eschewynge vyce and voluptuousties / & that they may mynistre & serue in the syghte of god with a pure hart and chast body. And to the entente that hope of pardon shall not encorage them to offende / we ordeyne / that who some euer hereafter be founden or taken corrupted with the vice of incontinencie (as he hath offendyd more or lesse) so shal he be ponysshed accordynge to the holy regular ordres / which we commaunde more effectuosly & strcythly to be kepte that such as the feare of god can not reuoke from synne. At the least wyse they may be cõpelled to forsake it by temporall ponysshement / that is to suspende them from theyr offyces / and also to take from thẽ theyr benefyces of the church. Furthermore all clerkes shulde diligently abstcyne from surfettes and dronkenes. wherfor they shuld moderatly vse wyne And no man shuld be puoked to drynke for dronkenes banyshyth a man from his wyt and discression. And also encorageth a man to the pleasure of the body. Therfore we haue decreed that such abusion must vtterly be forsaken / and that in all partes they shulde be bounde to

drynke

drynke after a moderate fashyon. And if any of them in these forsayd thynges be founde culpable (except he beyng of his superiour admonyshed wylbe reconsyled) he shalbe from his offyce and benefyce suspendyd. And clerkes shall not exercyse worldly offyces / nor vse marchaūdyse / especially such as be vnhoneste They shall not gyue audience to mynstrelles / Jesters / & dyssardes. Let them chefely auoyde tauerns / except it be in case of necessyte / as a man purposyd in a iorney. They may not play at cardes / nor at dyce / nor vse no suche maner of gamys. Theyr crownes muste be shauen accordyngly. And also they muste dilygently exercyse themselfe in all offyces of the church with all other good & vertuous studyes. Theyr vpper garmentes ought to be close / and not to longe or to shorte. They ought also in nowyse to were any rede clothe / or grene welted sleuys / or shewys / brydles / or sadels gylt no laces / nor lachettes garnyshed with syluer or golde / nor yet any rynges / except it be such as be allowyd by dignite of theyr offyce. Also it is commaunded / that no preste kepe any wome̅ by whom yt may be suspected. For if any preste /

deane or ſubdeane beynge ſuſpectyd of fornication with any woman / be after the ſecounde or thyrd warnynge/founde with her in communication/or conuerſaunt with her in any maner of wyſe: immediatly after let hym be excommunicate / for women be not permyttyd to dwell with clerkes/except they be ſuche maner of perſons/in whom the lawe of nature wyll not ſuffre any defaulte to be ſuſpected. Clerkes may vſe no playes toyes / nor gamynges in the churche. The goodes of clerkes ſhulde be forthe in comyn/they ſhulde eate in one houſe/ and ſlepe vnder one couerynge. Marke therfore/how here it is manyfeſt i what good order / deuotion / and example the lyf of regulars ſomtyme hath byn. And how of ryght it ought now to be. Therfore let them be fearfull / and let them gyue no confidence to any vnreaſonable diſpenſacion/which is the very deſtruction of all vertuouſe lyuynge. And let them take no regarde vnto cuſtomed lybertye/for that is but a meane to corrupte a perfyte lyfe / and truely very neceſſyte/or apparaunt profyte is the mother or originall begynnyng of diſpenſations/by whom theyr vicious conuerſacion

sa . n is excusyd/as hygh and holy byss-
shopes/Leo/ and Gelasius with many
other princypall doctours doo afferme/
but nowe consequently / some of these
thinges shalbe more especially declared.

¶ why clerkes or regulars ought
to bere no maner of weapon/
nor to fyght/nor vse to set
theyr here/nor yet to
be vsurers.
The. v. article.

IT is conuenient(as it appe-
ryth) that all mynystres/cler-
kes/ or regulars of the chur-
che shuld themselfe applye to
the seruyce of god/ that is to
say/they shuld be gyuen to prayer & con
templacio. And to the laude and prayse
of theyr maker. And to desyre god to be
mercyfull / as well to them / as to other
theyr frendys & neyghbours / by whose
exhibicion and stypendes they are vp-
holden and susteyned. And seynge that
the excercyse of warre (wherin the in-
quietnes & trouble of mās hart do espe-
cially remayne)shuld be a great impedi-
mēt against these good actes to be done/

therfore warre is forbydden them as wel as marchaundyse / for that cause they ought not to bere wepon/lest they shuld be prouokyd to fyght/& least they shulde shewe themselfe as men redy to fyght & leste they shuld quarell with other men. But for all that if they iorney by any daũgerous places/than may they were necessarye weapons to fere theyr enemyes / and themselfe moderatly to defende with harmeles defence / moreouer where as regulars are deputed to serue the altare/wherin the passion of Christ is representyd in the sacrament/there is good cause why they are prohibyted to shed blood/but rather are bound to shed theyr owne blood for the loue of Christe and ryghtwysnes. Therfore this sayng of the Apostle/of them is to be obseruyd Stryue ye not with wordes / for it is to no purpose profytable / but to the subuertion of the herars. Also further he sayth thus. If any man be supposed full of debate/we and the church of god wyl haue no suche companye. And therfore scripture saith. That mã is to be cõmẽdyd / that conuayeth hymselfe from debate and stryfe. And furthermore they ought to be armyd with spirituall de-

fence

ferre/to preuayle and resyst agaynst the en mpes of theyr helth. And to such defence they ought to induce the laye people by theyr example. Of this matter ye holy father saynt Ambrose / in his boke callyd de officiis / and also in other places wrote many thynges. In the decre also/many thinges were induced to this purpose. For certaynly it was institute at a generall counsell / that what clerke so euer had dyed in fyghtyng skoldyng/ or other games of the gentyles/shuld be prayed for / nother in oblation / nother in any orysons/or prayer / but shulde fall into the handes of the iudge / yet notwithstandyng he shulde be buryed. Also it was ordeyned in the counsell of Tolytan/that clerkes beryng weapon ryotously shulde lese the degre of theyr orde / and be banyshed for euer in to monasteryes / lykewyse it is red in the actes of the counsell of Melde. That none of the clergie shuld take vpon them weapons of defence/nother i any wyse shuld go armyd/but the name of theyr profession they shuld perfourme both with religyouse maners / & also with religious habyte. The which thyng if they despysed / they shulde be greuously correctyd/

as fyrst to lese theyr proper degrees/and further to be taken as extreme despy-sers of the holy canons/and also cursyd corrupters of the auctorite of the church for they can not serue both god and the worlde. Furthermore they ought vtterly to auoyde all worldly glorye/ and generallye all thynge that prouokyth a man to incline to the pleasure of the body/with all other vayne curiosyties. Certayne precepts aggreable with the same be especially enioyned by the Apostle/ sayng thus. In no wyse be ye conformable to this worlde:/ but be you reformyd with the spirite of discretion whereby he meanyth that they oughte to abhorre & auoyde the settynge of theyr bushes the comlynes of theyr locks the trymmyng of theyr here. And chefely the roughnes of theyr berdes/in so much that it is prohibyte that women shulde be attyryd in here/and as Albertus wrote vpon Job/ sayeng thus: Such thynges do prouoke concupyscence/for clerkes are commaũded to be garnyshed both inwardly and outwardly with a vestiment of vertue/ and also they shuld be inwardly resplendent and shynynge in good maners/ so that they myght procede honestly/being

gouer

go uernyd in all theyr syght & sensys/Be
s[illegible]s this vsurie is most straitly prohi-
by[illegible] not onely to them/but also to the
vniuersall kynd of faythful people/in so
muche that as the philosophour graun-
tyth. Vsurie is a thyng moste principall
agaynste nature. And as the prophete
Dauyd describeth a iuste man/thus he
sayth: He lent not his money to vsurie.
And as Clymat⁹ shewyth. A nygard is
a mokker of the gospell/muche more an
vsurer/& especially a clerke whom it be-
houyth to be more spirituall & vertuous
than a lay mā/for as S. Jerome satyh/
it is the moste vehement destruccion of
the church/whan lay men be better dis-
posed then clerkes. And vsurie truely
with symonye be two the most mysche-
uous braunches of auaryce/wherupon
S. Isidore wrytyh i this maner of wyse
It is cōtayned i the law of holy fathers
that prestes/clerkes/or regulars shulde
seuer thēself frō al vulgare & secular lyf/
absteynyng always frō the voluptuous
desyres of the worlde & eke of the fleshe/
they may in no wyse gyue thēself to vsu
rie/they must hate & abhorre the occasiō
of all suche fowle lucre & fraude/ye they
must auoyde & eshewe the affecciō of mo-
ney as though it were a kendlyng of all

¶ For what cause regulars are bound especially to folow chastyte of body and clennes of mynd / & therfore they ought not to haunt the cloystres of nönes / nor to entre into theyr houses.

The. vi. article.

THis thyng hath byn by many holy and hyghe byshops / many generall counsayles / and many prouincyall constitucyons moste especially / moste strongly / and moste oftentymes / enioyned and commaunded vnto ministres of the churche / to all regulars and men constitute and appoynted to holy ordres that they shuld absteyne from all vnclennes / incontinence / and detestable fornicaciō. For in the synne of the flesshe is the moste great & manifest turpitude bestlynes / dishonestie / and fylthynes. And also suche maner of vyces in the clergie / be moste vehemently rebukyd of the people / many great vices be to them annexed and ensuynge of them. For syrste they acquyre the hate and dysdayne of god / than they procure the ignorannce of all spirituall thynges / they engendre also a peynfull sufferaunce of vertuouse exercyse / they blynd a mans mynde / and in conclusion they pluckē a

man

man clene away from the loue and contemplacion bothe of godly and heuenly thynges. Therfore (in so much that the holy misterye of the altare is most pure/ and the sacramentes of the churche be most clene and ghostly (especially the sacrament of the blessyd body of our lord) it is most vicyous and inconuenyēt that the mynysters of the church and altare/ shulde so precyous sacramentes defyle & corrupte/ with that moste fowle fylthye and abhominable synne of the flesh and bestly concupiscence/ye and to presume to serue. And to receyue so depe a fountayne of purite & clennes/ with so fowle and corrupt a mouth. And furthermore syns the tyme of the blessyd Apostles/ this moste vyle and abhominable vyces haue byn prohybyte vnto clerkes and mynystres of the churche vpon moste strayte & greuous paynes. The whiche thynge (to the entent it may be the better knowen) I wyll somewhat therof declare. And although that strayte and solitary lyfe is now (the more pyte greatly decayed) yet neuertheles I wyl touch a lytyl of the statutes and rulys of them that it may appere how vehemently holy fathers (in whom the inspiracion of

the holy ghoste / the zele of iustice / & the loue of vertue/dyd excellently preuayle) dyd prohibite the vnclennes of clerkes regulars and prestes. Accordyng verily to the rulys of the Apostles / euery man constitute in holy ordres / especyally a preste/fallyng into the synne of vnclennes / shulde be for euer more deposyd / which long tyme after was obserued for the synne of aduoutrie / as concernynge ponyshément / wherof it is conteyned in the seuenth synode holden at Aurelianee. That if a clerke hath ben conuycted of aduoutrye/or had confessed it/ he shuld haue ben deposyd from his office/and so to haue ben commyttyd vnto a monastery duryng his lyfe. And also the holy father Pope Clement (as it is red)made institucyons after the same maner of perpetuall deposynge and ponyshement of prestes doyng fornicacio. But after that/in the tyme of pope Sylnester/that extreme correction was somwhat mitygate / as touchynge prestes/ that were penitent and cõtryte of theyr owne propre and free wyll/and such as ceassed theyr synfull lyuynge for in the counsell of Gangara and also in the decrete/the.xxviii. distinctiõ it is read/that

if a

if a preste hath commytted fornicacion/ although he ought by the rulys of the Apostles/to be deposyd yet by the auctorite of that blessyd pope Siluester / if he dyd not contynue in vyce/but refusyd it and rose agayne of his owne frewyll/ that then he shulde take repentaunce in this worlde for the space of ten yeres. And beyng remouyd from the other brethern by the space of thre monethes/he shulde be vsyd with bred and water / frō euenyng to euenyng / but in sondayes & other principall feastes/he shuld be fedd with a lytyll drynke/fysche or ryse/without flesche or blood/without egges/or els chese/lyenge on the grounde nyght and day desyryng the mercy of god. Than whan thre monethes were determyned/ he shulde come forthe/but not abrode in to open places/for feare least/the multitude of good people myght be offendyd by his cuyll crample. And it is in no wyse lawfull for a preste to be enioyned as a lay man to any open penaunce/but after that he hathe perusyd the space of a yere and an halfe lyuyng with bred and water / excepte in sondayes & other principall feastes / in whom he myght

vse wyne

vse wyne/flesshe/blood/egges/and chese/ accordyng vnto theyr regular mi[illegible]are/ but the fyrste yere and an halfe beynge fynysshed/he myght haue the sacrament mynystred to hym to that intent that he shulde not dispayre in god / and that he shulde come to peace/that is to saye / he shuld be reconsylyd vnto his bretherne/ and synge psalmes in the quere amonge them agayne / yet shulde he not come to the ende of the alter / but accordynge to the sayeng of blessyd Clement/he shulde mynistre inferiour offyces. Than vnto the ende of the seuenthe yere/at all tymes/ except yᶜ thre Ester holy dayes/he shuld fast brede & water thre certayn dayes in euery weke. But the space of seuē yeres beyng fulfyllyd/if the bretherne among whom he repentyd / do comende his penaunce as worthy and acceptable in the syght of god/than the byshop according to the auctorite of blessyd pope Calyxt/ maye hym reuoke vnto his prystine and former honoure . And surely it is to be knowen / that by syngynge one psalter/ in the secoñd ferye/or gyueng one peny to poore folke (if nede be) he may be redemyd after seuen yeres ended. Than vnto the ende of the tenth yere there is no

redemp

redempcion / but the syxth ferye muste nedes be obserued with brede and water. But for all this in proces of tyme this forclayd correction vanysshed. And was / but meanely obseruyd / as in the thyrde boke of Decretalles is notifyed / where amonges all other it is reportyd that pope Alexander the thyrd wrote vn to a certayn bishop in maner folowyng. you ought straytly by interdiction and suspension to correcte clerkes cõstitute in holy ordres / that kepe concubynes / that they maye remoue suche maner of women out of theyr company / because no sinystre and froward suspicion maye be had of them. And if any of them resort to suche women / or presume to receyue them / that then they maye be accursyd with perpetuall sentence of excõmunicacion that other may refrayne from lyke offences by crample of them. Also the same pope wrote vnto an archbyshop of Canterbury on this fashyon ensuyng. we cõmaunde you dilygently to exhorte the clerkes of your iurisdictions that kepe any harlottes within theyr subdeanryes / that they doo them remoue & in nowyse to vse them agayn. And if they refuse to forsake them / than

to be

to be suspēdyd from all benefyces [illegible] he
churche vnto the tyme that they make
conuenient satisfaction. And if they be-
ynge suspendyd/ wyll presume to kepe &
retayne suche maner of women / then
loke that you remoue them from all ma
ner of benefyces of the churche for euer-
more. He speketh agayne in another de-
cretall on this wyse. For bycause that
clerkes can not intēd both to theyr plea
sure and carnall desyres/and also to the
diuine seruyce of the church/therfore for
theyr vnclēnes they ought to be dischar
ged of al the benefytes of the church. Of
this matter in many decretalles of po-
pes as of Gregorius/Siricius/Lucius
Innocentius / and other it is euidently
declared. where also this is addyd. Pre-
lates that presume to suffer such maner
of clerkes / especially beynge intreatyd
with money and other temporall com-
modite/shall incurre the same penaltye.
Here of an ordinaūce in the decree the
fourscore and thyrde distinction/is rade
on this fashion. If any byshop cōsent to
the fornicacion of prestes / deanes / or
clerkes in his diocyse: other for affec-
tion / prayer / or rewarde / or els if he
wyll not ponyshe and correcte offenders
by the

by the auctorite of his office: he shalbe from his office suspendyd. Of the which sayenge it is also concludyd that a bysshop that correctyth not the transgressions of such men: is more worthy to be callyd a sawltye dogge than a byshope. I pray you: what meanyth this worde: consent: Gratianus expoundyth it in this maner of wyse. He that withstandyth not vyce and errour: consentyth therto. Innocentius the pope to the same sayth. Errour that is not resysted is alowyd: and trewthe that is not defendyd is oppressyd: and that man is worthy to be suspectyd of secrete mayntenaunce: that wyll not withstand open synne. All which thynge may be principally supposed of prelates that are bound to resyst vyce: by very ductye of theyr office. But now seyng it standyth in such mysorder/howe greatly ought we to bewayle the abhominacion of the worlde that now is. Howe much is this miserable & deformyd estate of the church to be lamentyd: in whome other no ponysshement at all: or els the ponysshement of the purse is extendyd vpon wanton prestes clerkes and regulars: whyche daylye are permyttyd to walowe

in theyr myscheuous liuynge to [illegible]
cious occasion and euyll example [illegible] the
lay people. The regular visitaciō of cler
kes is to none effecte / for many of them
do so reioyce that they be so exemptyd/
that they may not be correctyd nother
of the deane/nor yet of the byshoppe/the
which is euyn a lyke matter as though
a monke shuld be exemptyd from the cor
rection of his abbot or priour. O what
maner of thyng is such exemption/whā
agaynst an exemption(moch lesse vnrea
sonable then this) the most holy and il-
luminate father saynte Bernard in his
boke de Consideracionibus wrote sharp
ly and discretely to pope Eugenius and
the same exemption manye maner of
wyse dyd reproue. And for the same ex-
emption he greatly rebukyd and con-
trollyd the foresayde pope Engenius
sayng thus. wo be to fylthy & wrechyd
synners vnponyshyd / which had leuer
to be reseruyd vnto the most strayt and
terrible iudgemente of god / and also to
fall into power of god euerlastyng/than
in this present lyfe to be duely correctyd
of theyr prelates / and to obey the rulys
and decrees of holy fathers/do not such
men seme to be of the nombre of them
that

that shall be reprouyd / and moste ferre from eternall blys. Seme they not also to be the chyldren of infernall torment / whom god sufferyth to lyue accordynge to the desyre of theyr hartes / and truste in theyr owne fantazyes. Furthermore for bycause regulars and all other constitute in holy ordres / be consecrate to diuyne seruyce / me thynketh that theyr fornicacion is sacrylege. And it is callyd sacrylege / for that it corruptyth holy ordre / by vnworthy handelynge and myscheuous abusynge that thynge that to god is consecrate. Therfore they are especyally prohibyte to haunte the cloystres of nonnes / & that vnder the payne of excōmunicaciō they come not within theyr houses to the entent that all cuyll occasion of sacrilege and vicious meddelynge with them shulde be auoyded / the which beyng commytted shuld be double sacrylege / and also a certayne abhominable and enorme aduoutrye / bothe with persones that haue offeryd themselfe vnto the heuenly spouse beyng professyd and consecrate / and also to enduce thē vnto the transgression of so solemne a bowe of chastyte which they haue promysed vnto almighty god to be contynently

nently obſeruyd and kept.

¶ Of ſobrenes to be obſeruyd of regulars and of all ſurfet ryot and dronkenes to be of them auoyded.

The. vii. article.

IT is cuyn as our lord ſpake/ by the ꝓphete Oseas. wyne/ dronkencs/ and womē / that is to ſay / fornicacion taketh away the harte of men/that is to wyte/it blyndyth theyr mynde and maketh darke the iudgement of mannes reaſon. And ſeyng it is the beſt part of man / to lyue accordyng to the iudgement of reaſon / than it apperyth that ſurfet and ryot maye engendre in man many incomodytees. For it hurtyth nature / it ſhorteuyth lyfe/it blyndyth vnderſtandyng/it procuryth many ſyknes infirmitees and tediouſnes/it engēdryth the hatered of god/it encreaſyth enuye/ it makyth a man redy to doo iniurye to other men / it inducyth flogardyſe and necglygence/ it prouokyth aman to vnmeſurable tryfulles and bablyng/it diſcloſyth alſo vtterly al ſecretenes of hart com-

compunction and fere. Therfore it is not onely prohybyte vnto al regulars & spirituall persons/but vniuersally to all faythfull christen people / and Christe hymselfe sayng thus. Take ye hede that your hartes be not oppressyd with surfet and dronkenes / nor with any other regard of this worlde. For in conclusion lyke as glotony doth corrupte ye mynd so it makyth the bodye to be dyfformyd monstrous / and depryueth a man from naturall comlynes/and also from a conuenient quantite of body/and that vyle voluptuousnes of taste is bought ryght dere. Therupon saynt Bernarde sayth/ that the pleasure of the throte that now adays is so muche made of / conteyneth scantly the bredeth of two fyngers / and yet for the delectacion of so lytyll a part howe dilygently / howe costly/and with howe great labour do we prepare / but at length to our great payne. By this meanes the backes and sholders of men are spredde / and made brode lyke monstres/herby the great belyes are not only fatted/but also puffed vp lyke women with chylde. And whyle the bondys be not able to bere the fleshe/many dyuers dyseases muste nedes engendre.

O with how great labour and ex[illegible]es is suche dere and delicyous pleasure prepared. Glotony and lechery doo obeye the pleasure of the fleshe. Surfet & dronkenes is the deuylles chaleys/for whan a man hath both replenyshyd his mynd and stomake Christe in suche a riotous persone can fynde no place. And lyke as fyre and water can not be mēgled both to gether/Ryght so spirituall and corporall pleasures can not be sufferyd in one place. For where Christ perceyuyth surfet of a riottous person in his drynkyng he wyll not vouchsafe to rewarde hym with his wynes that are more swete than suger or hony/And surely whan yt curious and delycate dyuersyte of metes and drynkes hath fully fedde the stomackes of men/there is no voyde pure nor clene place for heuynly fode. why loue ye voluptuosnes/forsakyng vertue and helth. Truely for a fowle and brefe swetnes and delectacion/ye do procure euerlastyng payne and bytternes/so that at the laste ye wyll desyre/as the rych glotton dyd/one droppe of water to quenche the hete of the fyre of hell/& yet ye shall not obteyne it. For agayne whom doth the feruent hete of the infernall hungre

and

and deuyllyshe thyrst and other most extreme punyshement/fume more than agaynst glottones/whiche do cõuert the necessary sustentacion of pore people into theyr owne pleasures. And playnly as S. Bernard wytnessyth. The fautes of the flesshe/the pleasure of the body/the fulnes of the wombe wyll other leue a man before dethe/ or els forsake hym at the poynte of dethe. Than this flesshe of yours shortly afterwardes shalbe deputed to wormes/the soule shalbe commyttyd to infernall punyshemẽt/where suche be compaygnyons in payne as were together compaignyons in vyce. O thou delicate man that swymmyste in pleasure & ryches/yet in them beynge wrapped thou lokyst euer for thyn owne confusion/death/and damnacion. ☞ Note what the Apostle saith. The kyngdome of heuyn/is nother mete nor drynke/nother sylke/nor purple/for the rych man habundaunt of these/shall strayte descende into hell. O ye delycate & voluptuose persones/whose god is the bely/whiche norysshe your hartes and bodye with ryot and lechery/what say yow to this: you do here that mete is ordeyned for the bely and the bely for mete/yet

god wyl destroy the one with the other/ and yet god shall destroye them bothe. Therfore let regulars that be almoste vtterly decayed for lacke of obedyence vnto holy rulys take hede and feare god which ye ryghtwyse iudge saith as here foloweth. wo be to you that be satisfyed with fode / for ye shalbe a hungred. wo be to you ryche men whose onely cõfort is in your ryches. wo be to you that lawghe for ye shal wepe and morne/dyd not Judas the Apostle wryte of these thynges / vomytyng theyr owne confusyons / to whom an infernall storme of darkenes is conserued and kepte. why sayeth the holy Apostle in this maner. They be not onely corrupted & spotted in theyr feastes/but also they be spottes and corrupcion/for that that in theyr fedyng/manyfolde synnes fallen amonge them. And lyke as the Apostle wrote to certayne of the Gentyles that were conuertyd sayng thus. Some tyme ye were darkenes/for in eatyng or feadyng they do not onely excede in qualite or quantite of meates or drynkes / but also in vayne superfluous and euyll wordes/ I

wyll

wyll not say in sklaunderous knanysche and wanton/in topes/tryfulles/playes/ mockes / mowes / dissolucions / losse of tyme/and moch more beelnes. The prophete Jobell cryeth vnto suche maner of people/sayenge: Awake ye dronkardes / and wepe/and all you that drynke wyne for plesaunce and swetnes/morne ye / for it shall perysche out of your mouthes / furthermore of glotonye that vycyous mother/folowyth fowle lechery a armore vycyous doughter. Now be not all faythfull christen people bounde to lyue straytly in penytent conuersacion and ferefully in respecte of god aboue. And the hyer that regulars be constitute in degre and spirituall estate / so be the more vertuous/sobre/and fearful than the laye people. Let no man disceyue hymselfe for god requyreth of euery man that he shall lyue accordynge to the degre that he is callyd vnto. Besydes this the longer that an euyll custome is vsyd/the more inuste and incurable it is. And therfore from the fyrste foundacion of the church/holy & blessyd fathers haue moste straytly and vehe-

mently prohibyte the synne of th fl he glotony/droukennes/ and wantones to the minystres of the churche/ as of the same/in the decre many thynges are declared. It is red also in the rulys of the Apostles/that a byshop/preste/or deane/ gyuen to ryot or dronkenes/ must other forsake it / or els be condempned and deposed. A subdeane reder or synger in the churche doyng the same/must other ceasse or be expulsyd from the communiõ. The same purpose it is brought in/ in the. xxxv. distinction/that especyally dronkenes shuld be auoyded of clerkes/ for of all other vyces it is the norice & and cherysher. Also in the counsell of Agathon it was ordeyned / that a clerke beyng dronke shulde be seueryd from the communion/for the space of xxx. dayes/ orels corporally to be ponyshed. And the Apostle in lyke maner wryteth to all faythfull people and enioyneth them in this wyse. That they lyue not in glotony & drõkenes. &c. And also regard that they vse not the desyres of the fleshe. And agayne / we be dettours vnto the fleshe / not to that intent that we shulde lyue after the fleshe / for if we lyue after the fleshe/ we shold dye.

Another

Anot'er thing there is wherof the moste holy peter the Apostle dothe vs aduertyse/sayenge thus: welbeloyd frendes/ I beseche you abstreyne from carnall desyre/which makyth batayle agaynst the soule. Further S. paule sayet (It behouyth a bysshop to be sobre/chaste/and not dronken) perteyneth also to all men cõstitute in holy ordres / as the holy fathers Ambrosy & Augustine do wytnesse bysydes all this/it appereth by the wordes of S. Jerome/ howe hard & difficyle it is for hym that kepyth not sobrenes/to kepe his chastyte. The princes & mynystres of the churche/which do walowe in delicyous pleasure fayenynge at feastes that they kepe chastyte/ be (by the wordes of the prophete) worthy to be caste out from fayre houses and delycate bankettes / into exterior darkenes/ whiche Jerome sayth further. The glotony of the bely prouokyth lechery/and puttyth a parte euery good wroke and a bely boylynge with wyne sone fallyth to pleasure of the body. For why the bely of man and the preuy membres be verye nere one to an other / so that by the nerenes of those mẽbres ye maye perceyue the more redy inclinacion of vyce. Fur-

thermore as it is mencioned (Leuitici primo) Our lorde commaundyd the prestes of the olde lawe / whose presthode or profession was but carnall and figuratyue that they shulde drynke no wyne uor any thynge that myght make them dronke / whose wordes are these / wyne and all that may make you dronke / ye shall not drynke what tyme ye entre in the tabernacle of the testamēt lest ye dye so that ye maye haue knowlege to dyscerne betwene the holy & vnholy / Howe moche more this carnalite / dronkenes / glotony / and voluptuousnes / to be auoyded of prestes & ministres of the church / whose presthode is all together spirituall / and therfore shuld continually be occupyed in diuine seruyce. Therfore louyngly he enbraceth sobrenes / which is the very secreat keper of mynde / sensys / body / and also membres / the defence of chastite / the gouernour of shamefastnes the very preseruor both of peace & frendshyppe. For truely dronkenes in a preste or regular is as haynous as sacriledge / & also in any other mā it is a great vyce sobrenes prolongyth the naturall lyfe of man / it noryshyth the lyfe of grace / it

deser-

deseruyth the lyfe of ioy / it causyth the
bodye of man to be well proporcyoned/
and valyaunt/it makyth a quyet harte/
it makyth redye a mans mynde to pro-
cede in wysdome and vertue / it makyth
a man apte to applye diuyne seruyce/to
laude god in hymnes and psalmes. And
to be onely gyuen to holy medytacion.
Therfore regulars that are commaun-
dyd to serue almyghty god / and to be
contynually gyuen to the obseruaunce
of hym must euermore obserue this ver-
tue of sobrenes. And as the most hyghe
byshoppe hathe straytly commaundyd/
that if wyues be stronge they muste be
temperyd vnto them / nor in any wyse
that one prouoke another to drynkyng/
but especyally let them beware of suche
maner of drynkyng/as men call drynk-
shyng/pleggynge/& quaffyng/which be
rily be bestly / & fowlysche / for that that
maye agree with the complexion of the
one/maye fortune not to agre with the
cõplexion of the other. And in conclusiõ
to knowe howe vicyous and out of or-
dre it is to excede in the dyces forsayd/
it apperyth by that / that the pope
commaundyd all suche offenders to be

suspen-

suspendyd from theyr offyces and bene-
fyces/except by warnyng they be recon-
sylyd. For if a principall ruler or gouer
nour of regulars/wyll not correct suche
euyll doers / other if he hymselfe do per-
sonally offend(which god forbyd)in any
vyce before touchyd. O howe great and
horrible damnacion hangyth ouer his
hed/and also ouer the hedes of such syn-
full regulars as do offende in the same/
not wyllyng to receyue any holsome dis-
ciplyne or lernyng in this present lyfe.
¶ Howe it is prohibyte to all clerkes
and ministres of the churche to occuppe
any marchaundyse: or to excercyse any
temporall offyces or cheuysaunce.

The. viii. article.

ACordyng vnto the effecte of
the ende / all meane thynges
muste be ordryd/for the ende
causyth thynges of necessyte
to be done: whiche be ordey-
ned for the ende. And seynge thestate of
regulars was institute prouyded and
grauntyd (as is before expressyd) to the
entent that they shulde applye to the ser
uyce of theyr maker/with a free / pure/&
quyet mynde/& seyng also that by theyr
merytes and prayers they shulde be re-
consy-

consyled and desyre god to be mercyfull
bothe to themselfe and also to them: by
whose almes/charite/ & stypendys they
are susteyned: for that cause they are for
bydden to vse any worldly actes or occu
pations which shulde be a vehement let
both vnto ye forsayd quyetnes of mynd
vnto theyr pure profession of god/ & also
vnto theyr inwarde lybertye to dyuyne
matters: wherby they shuld be dyschar-
ged of all secular and wordly busynes/
And these be the same worldly busynes
that be ordeyned for worldly lucre: that
is to wyte: worldly marchaundyse and
secular offyces by whom the hart of mā
is greatly dysposyd to outwarde thyn-
ges is greatly wrappyd in worldly thin
ges. And also with drawen from spiri-
tuall and ghostly thynges. To the con-
trarye wherof the Apostle sayth in this
wyse. None that seruyth god ought to
entangle hymselfe in worldly busynes.
wherof the byshoppe Nicasius spake in
the actes of the counsell of Cartage on
this fashyon. I suppose that my sugge-
stion doth ryght well please your holy-
nes: & partly displease ye: which is/that
suche as serue god/ and annexed to the
clergie/shuld not medle in worldly busy-
nes/

nes/offyces / or ſtuardſhypes of houſes.
The holy byſhop Gratianus ſaith that
this ſentence before reherced was inſti-
tute of the Apoſtles / that is to ſay that/
no mā myniſtryng in the ſeruyce of god
may folde hymſelfe in worldly buſynes.
And therfore clerkes may be no purcha-
ſers of houſes and ne purchaſers of hou
ſes may occuppe the offyces of clerkes.
And further to proue theſe thynges / it
euidently apperyth in the.xiiii.queſtiō.
As this / it was eſtablyſhed in the ſtatu
tes of rulys at the counſell of Tarracō/
that who ſo euer wold be one of the cler
gie / he muſt not vſe the ſtudy of byenge
good chepe and ſellynge dere / and if he
dyd/he ſhuld be correctyd by the clergy.
For that purpoſe alſo it was inſtitute
in the holy ſynode of Nicco / that for by
cauſe many clerkes folowyng the fowle
lucre of auaryce/do forget the preceptes
and commaundementes of god / there-
fore that holy counſel dyd ordeyne this/
that is to wyte. If any man from hens-
forthe were founde takynge any vſury/
eyther folowyng any fowle lucre by any
ſuche maner buſynes/or puttyng forthe
any maner of corne for aduauntage or
goynge about any ſuche matter of mar-
chaun

chaun? yse / for the onely lucre & gaynes therof / he shulde then be expulsyd from the clergie: and another of the churche degree to be had in his place. Therof pope Sclastus speakyth in lyke maner sayeng thus. Clerkes know ryght well: that they ought to abstcyne from suche vnworthy gaynes: and also to refrayne from all crafte and couetousnes of any maner of marchaudyse. And of what degree so euer they be that wyll not ceasse to vse such lucre: immediatly they muste be compellyd to forsake theyr offyces in the church. In the counsell also of pope Martyn it was cõmaũdyd in this wyse If any of them forgetynge the feare of god had wne vsurye vpõ trust to wynne but the hundreth parte therof or lokyd for gaymes by any maner of marchaundyse: or hath taken increase: by byeng or sellyng any wyne: corne: or other thyng: he shuld be caste downe from his degree and another of the clergye shulde haue supplyed his stede & place. The sayenge of pope Melchiades herewith agreyth. The holy generall coũsel hath decreyd: that hereafter no clerke shall hyre any possessiõs or intermedel with any worldly busynes: except it be for the charge &

(mayntenaũce

of infantes/orphleyns/and wydowes/ or excepte he were commaundyd by his bysshop to take the charge of any goodes longyng vnto the church: for the offyces spirituall and temporall are exercyse. But furthermore it apperyth about the ende of the thyrde boke of Decretalles in the Laterau coũsell: what busynes is prohibite vnto clerkes. And thus it is there sayd. There be many secular busynes of the which we shall touche parte/ bycause vnto them all carnall concupiscence appertcyneth. And what so euer a man that couetyth more thã is ryght: it is callyd fowle lucre/ it is forbydden vnto thẽ iniustly to take or receyue any rewardes: to hyre any mã for any worldly gayne or pray/ to loue any contention debate or skoldyng to plede or dispute in secular plees/ except it be for the defence of orphelyns/ or wydowes. They ought to be no doctoures or proctoures of secular matters: to loue no seculer games/ or gyftes of fylthy actes or communication/ to delyte in dyse/ to desyre vnconuenient apparayle for theyr estate: to lyue in delycyousnes: to walowe in glotony and dronkenes: to haunt: or to hauke: or to be conuersaũt in any vayne or superfluous

fluous busynes. Behold how vtterly we prohybyte these thynges with all other lyke/ vnto regulars and mynysters of the altare of god. In therulys of the apostles it is ferther of this matter mencioned after this facion. A bysshop/prest/or decane ought in nowyse to take vpō thē any secular cure or charge. Pope alexander the thyrde dyd also forbyd both regulars / and other clerkꝫ vpon peyne of cursynge that they shuld make no marchaū dyse for any worldly lucre. Saynt Jerome also sayth in this mauer. Flee and auoyde from the company of a clerke beynge a merchaunt. Auoyd from pouerte to ryches/ from a meane man to a noble man/ as though it were frō a plage of ye Pestilēce. Therfore prestes/ and clerkes be forbydden / to be brokers of any secular busynes. All this is confyrmed by pope Nicolas in the. xxii. chapytre of the decree in the thyrd questyō sayeng this. It came to knowlege at a general counsel that certayne of the clergye had takē vpon them secular matters/ for the fowle lucre of great possessyons. Therfore by that holy coūcell it was decreed that fromthensforth no prest/clerke/nor regular shulde hyre any possessyons/or anter-

medle with any ſecular matters or pra-
curatiõs except ſuch as be callyd by the
law therunto for the defence of ſuche as
be within age orphellynes / or the great
neceſſytes of wydowes / or els yf the Bi-
ſhop hath cõmyttyd the gouernaunce of
the churche goodes vnto them. And ther
fore / oftentymes it is touched in the de-
cree that ſome maner of buſynes be vn-
lawfull to be don of all men and that be
ſuche as can not be done without tyme
as vſurye & ſymonye. And ther be ſome
that ſeldome or neuer hardly may be
done without ſynne as the marchaundy
ſe before reherſyd. But now to knowe
wherfore clerkes & other mynyſtres of yᵉ
churche ought to abſteyne from all ſuch
worldly buſynes / ſaynt Thomas in the
lxxvii. queſtion of his boke cõpendiouſly
touchyth ſayeng thus. Clerkes ought
not only to abſteine from ſuche thynges
that be euyll of them ſelfe / but alſo from
ſuch thynges as haue a ſauour or colour
of euyll as marchaũdyſe hath / forby cau
ſe it is ordeyned for worldly lucre / which
clerkes vtterly ought to deſpyſe and cõ-
temne. Secõdaryly for the great haũt of
ſynne among merchauntꝫ. Thyrdly by
cauſe that by marchaũdyſe the mynde of
man

man is wrappid with warldly carkes & vtterly withdrawen/ from godly thyngs To this the holy Martyr and Bysshop Cipzianus notyng the occasyon thereof addyth his mynde sayeng. Suche as be honozid with holy prestbode oz cõstitute in the seruyce of clerkes ought them selfe to applye to nothynge/but to the altare and sacrysyce of god with holy and deuoute prayers/& lercyons. Behold therfoze to how vertuous /quiet and spirituall lyfe and good example regulars be bound whiche be cõmaundyd to abstcyne not only from cuyll and vyce it selfe / but also from all spyce of cuyll and occasyon of synne/in lyke maner from all sensuall affection/ from the plesures of this wozlde/from all pompe and wozldly garnyshynge / mekely also and lowly from all vayne and superfluous actes playes tryfulles / oz games. And furthermoze they be commaundyd in nowyse to geue audyence to mynystrelles / gestours / oz dysardes / to play at dyse/ oz cazdes/ oz to be present at suche games as shoze playnly in the Artycle folowyng is declared.

¶ For what cause Clerkes/ Regulars/ and other cõstitute in holy ordres ought to refrayne fro mynstrellz Jesters and dysardes/ tauernes/ & eke the play of Cardes an Dyse.

The. ix. Artycle.

IT is conueniẽt for mynystres of the church (whom it behouith to dyfferre frõ the lyfe & maners of secular mẽ) to be rype in good maners and dysposicyon/ to geue dylygence vnto contricyon & to the fere of god/ in lyke maner to applye them selfe vnto praier/ psalmodyes with other actis of penaũce in the syght of almighty god/ to the intent that lhey may please and satisfie god/ aswell for theyr owne excesse and synne/ as for the offences of theyr foũdars and benefactours. Therfore they are cõmaundyd to beware of suche thynges as wyll them dysceuer from contrition remorse of cõscience and deuotyon/ and suche as wyll enduce vnperfite lyuyng and engendre worldly condicyons/ as these be/ that is to say/ famylyarite/ excercyse/ games/ & dissportes of mynstrellz/ Jesters/ & dyssardys/ haũtynge

synge of tauerns feasts and bankettes / play nge at dyse and cardys/whereunto many enorme vyces be annexed / and so it procedeth of the loue and desyre of mo ney and concernyth auarcyte. But furdermor that it may be more depely plainly an surely notyfied / after what facyon it is lawfull for regulars and mynystres of the churhe some tyme to play/ & what maner of disport is comly for them/that is to be notyd that saint Thomas wrytyth in his secounde destinctions. Durãdus also in his boke callyd summa. Johan in his boke callyd summa cõfessorũ/ and other are of thẽ same opynyon sayeng thus. Lyke as a man nedyth corporall refreshyng/ rest/ & slepe/ forbycause he is not able to labour contynually / ryght so the soule hath nede of recreacyon and comfort/ whiche must be done by some wordes or actis where nothyng is intendyd or required but only spirituall delectacion and pleasure. And these be callyd wordys or actes of pastyme / and dysport concernyng whom/ thre thyngs are princyppally to be obserued. The fyrst is this. That no such delectacyõ be required / by wordes or actis inhoneste fylthy or hurtefull to any man. The secunde is

that the grauyte and deuotion of hart
may in nowyse be resoluyd by ony suche
game The thyrde is that ye game may
agree both with the person/ tyme/& place
and also yt the game be garnyshed with
other circumstaunces of vertu. And tru-
ly that vertue wherwith a man may so
conuenietly behaue hymselfe/ in games
or playes/is(after the mynde of the phi
losophour in the fourth boke of Ethyks)
callyd. Furdermore yf there be any fow-
le or fylthy wanton hurtefull/ or sklaun-
derous wordys / or actes exercysed in such
games/ or playes. It is a great synne &
oftentymes a synne mortall / although
peraventure the play of it selfe / be but
a synne venyall. Now here we may per-
ceue/ with whom/ what tyme/ and after
what facyon it is lawfull for Regulars
and other mynystres of the churche to
play. Suche may play after the maner
and facyon forseyd/ as do cõsyst in good
exercyse bothe of spirituall and tempo-
all thynges / so that therwith they do
not them selfe euermych defatigate and
make wery. But the same lybertie is not
gyuen vnto them that be full of bab-
lynge and Idelnes/ whiche contynually
do moue lawghter and wyldnes whiche
also

also do haunte bankettes / and in them exceede bothe in communicacion mockes gestis outragyousnes and intemperancye and also in all other immoderate cõceites. Therfore the mynystres of the churche do greatly offende / and deserue intollerable punysshement / especyally regulars and suche as are constitute in holy ordres / whiche shuld be euery day ready to do such thynges as perteigne to the seruyce of god / and spedely performe theyr howres and tymes of prayer / hastely puttynge them selfe forward in dyuyne seruyce. But in the stede therof they do dylygently fulfyll such thynges as may please the carnall carcas / fedyngeit gorgeously and delycately delytynge in many praty seueral toyes. And furthermore whan theyr belyes be full or at other vacaunt tymes / they apply thẽ selfe other to gestes and tryfulles or elles to that / that is more enorme and out of the way / as to play at cardis and dyse / or beynge in presens where suche games be vsed comonyng / talkynge / and beyng in great fauor or familyarite with the players / beryng many tymes half parte whith thẽ / in there wynnyng or lesing.

Certaynly these men haue no reasonable cause to play but rather in such tyme as they do play they oughte to bewayle theyr synne / & the tyme that they haue spent in all such vayne recreations / idelnes / tales / fables / laugh*.es / vnfruytfully / ye and to say the treuth vycyously / & also to morne and make amendes accordyngly / for al theyr negligens and defautes whiche they haue commyttyd in not performyng theyr dyuyne seruyce. But these maner of persones are only gyuen to theyr games and dysportes / & as for theyr deuocion and perfytnes of hart (yf peraduẽture they had ony before) it is altogyther seuered and corruptyd. O god lord howe perillous is the lyfe of such men / ye how wycked and damnable whiche (beyng bound after dyner & supper done / to retorne to theyr chambres) or to go in to theyr studyes or libraries / there to be gyuen (as Cipriane saith) to holy redynge to holsome doctrine & deuoute meditation) wyl vtterly shewe thẽ selfe vnto vtward thyngs / and stobburnly dyspose them selfe to carnal & worldly pleasure / dyuerse maner of wyse lesynge and in spendynge that precyouse tyme / that god hath grauntyd vnto them / nothyng

thyng regardyng that thyng that they are called vnto/nother dysclosyng theyr conscyens before god/nor yet at ony tyme dewly and effectually ponderynge/ how great and manyfold thynges they are bound vnto. Of suche persons saynt Bernard the electe seruāt of god spekyth thus. The necligēt slacknes of clerkys troblyth & molestyth the churche of god throughout al the world/surely they are enryched by other menes labor/ they ete the frutes of the erth without money or charge & deuoure ye laboures of ye poore a mans mynd accustomed with delycyousnes/ and barreigne of lernynge must nedes engēdre many vyces. How many (I pray you) shal we se the which do not serue nor obey Cryst as theyr lord & god but theyr wombes as theyr lord & god/ and veryly fornycaciō rayneth in many of them/which mynistryng vnto the maker and encreaser of all clennes and chastyte/with a fylthy mouth and an vnclene hart/do not fere the angell of god stādynge nere vnto them/ whiche may destroy and cute thē atwo in the myddyll. Furdermore as Duradus in his boke callyd summa procidith sayenge. Euery maner of play y^t is applyed vnto chaūce

or fortune (as the play at dyse is) may not be vsed for mony/ except syxe thyngz be aggreabble with the same. The fyrste is/ cōuenyence of ꝑson/ for it is not lawfull for clerkes to play at dyse/ wherfore let a comyn dyser/ or vsurar be put backe from obtaynyng spiritual dygnite/ notwithstandyng there be a custome to the contracy as apperith in the tytle Extra de excess. i. Inter dilectos. yet neuer the les the benefyce beynge obteigned/ the bysshoppe may owe hym fauour/ yf he wyll be corrected/ othirwyse of ryght he ought to be deposyd/ for otherwyse/ he ought by the law to be deposyd as aperith in the. xiiii. question in the tytle. Si quis & caritas. The secunde is conuenyence of mattyer or substaunce for some maner of wyse they may play for meate/ or drynke/ supposing theyr game alway to be cōmendable as is before expressyd/ so yt it be not intēdyd but as reasonable solace & no lucre. The thyrd is the cōclusyon therof/ that is to say/ that it be not exercysed for couetyse or auarice but for recreacyon. The fourth is/ measure/ for no man may play aboue a shyllynge/ although the player be veray rych as it appereth in the begynnynge of the tytle/ de

religiosis

religiosis. The fyftyth is tyme cōuenient so yt the play be not done in tyme of mor nynge penaunce or coūsell. The. vi. is ye conuenience of the facyon and maner so that your play be wythout dysceyte/and no man do any thynge agaynst the law of the game/nor oue prouoke another to play. Clerkes fallynge in to soo great blyndnes wyckednes/& frāsye may well note this/that notwithstandynge theyr holy rulys & decrees/ they be bold & presumptuous to dyse openly / and for that fowle desyre of lucre/they play at cardes and dyse lyke as it were secular gāsters / where yet not withstandynge they are bound to make restitucyon of theyr wynnyng orels to cōuerte it into some other charitable vse otherwyse they may not be sauyd nor yet absoluid by sacramētes There be also so many & so haynous offēces cōsistyng in such maner of play/ whiche raymūdus hostiensis Johan & other doth reherce/& ꝑauēture withī this boke somwhat towchid/let thē therfore repēt thē lyke wrechyd creaturis/let thē pōder theyr dredful iudgemēt & also ye tormētꝫ of hel intollerable: which sone afterward they wyl incure without remedie/ except they do not only forsake theyr abhominacion/but also do suffer cōdigne penaūce.

¶ An introduction of dyuers holsome consyderations whereby we may perceyue that all feythfull Christen people / especyally mynystres of the church are bound to despise all vanyte and superfluite of playes dysportes & other vayne delectations.

☞ The. i. Artycle. ☜

LIKE as the holy Apostle Saynt Petre wyttnessythe. Our sauiour Christe suffered for vs/ leuynge example to folowe his steppes. Therfore who so sayeth that he dwellyth in Christ he must walke as Christe walkyd. For membres ought to be conformable vnto theyr hed. And forsotheit is radde that Christe in this present world/ dyd syghe morne wepe and was trowblyd in spirit but he neuer played lawghyd nor made dysport. For that cause we are boũd(as moche as the fragylyte of humane nature wyll permyt and suffer vs) to folow his perfytnes graunte and dylygence as by his owne cõmaundment apperyth in this wyse. He that wyll be my seruaunt let hem folow me. And forder more.

¶ The fyrst introduction to despyse voluptuosnes vanite as slacknes is the cōsideratcyon of the lyfe and conuersacion of Christ/ which sayd vnto his dysciples in this maner. I gaue you exāple/ that as I dyd/ you shuld do/ holy sait Hierome affyrmyth the same saieng thus/ it is impossible to reioyce of this worlde/ and after to reigne with Christ. To ye same Salomon sayd in this wyse. I reputed lawghyng as an errour) and saye vnto Joy/ why art thow deceoyd in vayne.

¶ The secounde introduction is the consideratiō of the place of this present lyfe For we be in this worlde as though we were in a great exyle/ in a vale of lamentacyon in a cotage of calamyte / in a religion of the shadowe of deth in a feygned Kyngdome in a pylgrymage in a worne way and in a pryson.

Therfore me thynke it agaynst all wysdome in such a place to desyre to swyme in delycyousnes/ to be let slyppe amonge vanytees/ to be refresshid with lawghter and dysportz / ye & he that in this wolde couetythe to be prosperous in ryches plesure and honour shewyth hym selfe in so doynge to be no Pylgrym / nother the louer of the heuenly contrey/ but a cytesyne and

ne and/sone of babylon / a seruant of im
quite/ a man in the way of perdycyo[illegible].
Therof spekyth the Prophet Jeremie
saynge thus. O thow wandrynge and
wycked doughter / vnto the tyme that
thou be losyd & dissoluyd from delycyous
nes/ my soule refusyth all comfort. And
also this of the prophet Dauid wo is me
that my dwellyng place is prolongyd.
And the Apostle wytnessyth of the holy
Prophetes of the old testamēt and of ye
lawe of nature in this maner / that they
confessyd to be Pylgrymmes & estraun-
gers vpon the Erthe. Therfor from this
present exile we shuld oftentymes veray
feruently syghe vnto that most glorious
countrey of blessyd men/ & these worldly
ioyes we shuld abhore / as though they
were the veray carppis of euerlastynge
dethe/ that we myght say as the apostle
sayde. God forbyd that I shulde reioyce
in any thynge except in the crosse of my
lord Jesu Christe by whom the world of
me is persercuted/ and I of the worlde.
The thyrd is the consideration of daun-
gere ī whom we be put at large. For we
do walke and be alwayes cōuersaunt in
the myddys of gynnys/ & ī a fylde euery
where fully cōpassed with a multitde of
inunmerable

innumerable inuisible most cruel & crafty enemyes of this world whose power & furor very few do escape. And truly we be vncertein whether our conuersatiō do please god or no / or whether finally we shall be damned / or whether our offēces shalbe forgyuen. And also we knowe that greuously & many maner of wyse we displease our most strait & fereful iudge & that dayly we offend beyng also very prone & redy to vyce. All such thyngs yf we deuly consydre / it shal please vs better to morne and lament than to make dysports & playes. And also we shall say as Salomon sayd. Better it is to go to the howse of lamētacyon thā to the howse of plesure and solace. In the one house that is to say in the house of mornynge / the ende of all mortall men is notyd / & a man lyuynge shulde ponder what is to come.

¶ The fourth is the cōsideracyon of all euyll and myschyef as well of offence as of payne & punyshement that euery daye is done in the worlde (that is to say) bycause so many great and myschcuous actes be contynually done in the worlde / by cause our maker & myghtye of his creatures at all tyme is hadde in small

honour

honour and reuerence/ bycause contynu
ally so many soulȝ do eternally perysshe/
bycause so many and great tribulac...
calamytes/penury discomfort/ oppressi-
ons/do incessauntly chaũce our frendes/
neibours/ & membris of Christ of whom
(yf we loue them) we must haue compas
syon / as we wolde that thy shulde haue
compassyon of vs beynge in lyke case/
surely who so doth this dewly ponder/
he wyll say as Jeremye sayd.
who wyll geue to my hed/water/ and to
myn eyes a fountayne of terres/& I wyll
wepe euermore. And seynge Samuell so
longe tyme and so sorowfull bewayled
Saull/and Jeroonne the destruccyon of
Jerusalẽ. Paule also some of the Corin;
this/howe much more is our sorseis my
schefe to be bewaylyd. Therfore let vs
haue cõpassyon of our neibours beynge
in great daunger and dyscomfort.
¶ The.b.is the multitude and greatnes
of harme and dysplesure/ that suche de-
lectacions bryngyth vnto mã. For they
spoyle a man from all grace/ whiche de-
lectacyons also broght Salomon in to
great foly. And attẽpted Eue to the trãs
gressyon of goddes cõmaundment/ they
do behemently blynd the mynd of man
and

and harden and maynteyne hym in myschief ye they procure euerlastynge damnation. For that thynge whereen a man delyteth is but of shorte tyme his veracyon and trouble therfore is perdurable.
what man for the plesure of one nyghte/ wyl be glad euer after to lye i a brēnyng fornace. Wherfore presume we to commyt mortall synne where for one synne mortal we must be ponysshed with the feruent infernall paynes that euermore do endure. The syxth is vylēnes fylthynes and bestly pleasure of the flesshe/ for the which/ man is most despysed of god and made vnlyke to aungels/ and conformable to bestes/ wheruppon the sayenge of the Prophet Johel concernyng carnall desire is expoundyd on this facyon. The herdes of bestys dyd rotte and consume in theyr owne fylthynes and dunge.
And as the Prophet Dauid sayth in lyke maner. A mā that perceuyth not whā he is in honour / may be compared vnto brute and rude bestes / furdermore moch bytternes is mengled with the plesure of the worlde and the flesshe/ suche pleasure also is oftentymes acquisyte / and goten both with great expensys and daūgere / prepared with sore labor / and yet they

repent at lenght. Therfore Salomon sayeth youth and voluptuousnes be but vanytees. And forther this he sayde. I wyll go and swyme in delyte and walow in ryches/ & yet I perceyued that all was but vanyte. Therfore in this present lyf graunt to vs to take repentaunce/ let vs endeuer our selfe vnto the actes of penaūce/ let vs also euer abstayne frō wildnes of hart vanyte/ & obstynate lyberte.

¶ Of cōuenyent apparayle of mynystrs of the church/ espcyally of regulars/ & of theyr manyfold excesse in garmētes & of the despyze therof to be auoided.

☞ The.xi. Article. ☜

THE more vertuous yᵗ the mynystrs of the church are boūd to be in respecte of yᵉ lay people/ the more symple mekc & ful of good example they ought to be in theyr apparayle. They ought in lyke maner to obserue yᵉ thyng that is red in the boke of Ecclesiastes that is to say. Thou shalt not reioyce at ony tyme in thyne apparayle especially in such maner of apparayle as may geue cuyll occasyon or pleasantly intyse or moue the eyes or hartes of womē that behold it (that is to say) they be alwayes bound to beware of curiouse arayment &

pompous apparayle. And where also holy fathers as Jerome & Chrisostome & other do not only testyfye this of thē but also of euery faythfull creature sayenge thus. A man or a woman garnysshynge themself/ & by theyr deckyng & trymmig prouokyng the eyes of other vpon them although therof no myschyef doth ensue yet he or she so doyeng shal suffer eternal ponysshemēt/bycause they dyd put forth poyson/yf there had be any man yt wold haue dronke it that is to say they dyd shewforth temptacyon yf any man wold haue be attempted. If this abhompnacyon be so detestable among the lay people/it is much more mischeuous amōge the mynistres of the churche/ which principally be boūd to edifie other creatures in vertue. Therfor(seing they go so gorgeously)decked as though it were a bryde we may say as sait Bernard said behold how they go garnysshyd lyke to a bryd yt were cōmyng forth of her wedding chāber/insomych that yf ye se ony such ferre from you/ ye wolde rather iudge it to be the bryde than the prest that shulde her marye. Surely accordynge to the wetryne of holy fathers then be as well commaundyd to be contentyd with symple

apparayle/as wyth symple fare. Therof the holy Apostle sayth thus. Be ye in no wyse conformable vnto this world / but be ye renewed in ye spirite of your mynd Therfore a regular or a prest ought to be ware of al curyosyte/pompe/superfluyte vanyte/and wantones of al worldly garmentes/as the holy Doctours and Prelates/ Basilius/ Isidorus & other / haue vs enformed. But now cõcernynge this matter / the rulys and estatutes whiche sprange by the diuyne inspiracyon shuld be consyderyd. For why it is red in the seuenth synode/ and also in the.xxi.decre as here folowyth. All braggyng/ruffelig and garnysshynge is the thynge that is moste farre from holy ordre/ and it behoupth such Bysshopes and Clerkes whiche dresse them selfe in bryght glorious & plesaũt apparayle/ to amende it/for yf they remayn in weryng therof they shal be put to penaũce. In semblable wyse al such maner of men that vse oyntemẽtes such cursyd people also whiche haue thẽ in derysyon that be clothed in pore and relygyous ornamentes/shalbe correctyd by emprisonment. In the olde tyme verily a holy man(that is to say)a man constytute in holy ordres dyd lede his lyfe beynge

heynge couered with a verey vyle and meane garmēt. And truly euery garmēt that is not taken for necessyte/but for cō lynes(as Basilius sayeth) hath a spyce of pryde: moreouer Pope zacharye dyd institute this that folowyth. Bysshops Prestes and Decanes may were no secu lar apparayle/but garmentes conuenyent for theyr ordre. They may not presume to walke in ony cyte comyne way or strete without theyr cowlys or couerynges except it be in some long iornay / for lyke as a woman prayeng in the church barcheded/accordynge vnto the sayenge of thapostle doth dishonest her owne hed euen soo prestes or regulars wandrynge abrod without theyr cowles or other vpper garmētes dyshonest theyr Prestehod and relygyon/ wherfore it is ordeined y^t yf any of them do stobbornly presume to transgresse the sayd institutes / that he shuld be expulsyd from the relygyous cō gregation/vnto the tyme that he had fulfillyd such thynges that were ordeigned by the same estatutes for the same purpose. Innocentius the second aggreeth with the same sayeng thus we cōmaund that as wel bysshope/ as prestes and clerkes shall thē selfe endeuer to pacifye god

and man/ both in theyr spiritual estate &
also in theyr corporal behauour/& not in
superfluyte cuttyng gardyng or coloure
of garmentȝ/ nother they shall offend or
hurt by theyr shauyng the aspecte of the
beholders whose rule and example they
ought to be/ but rather they shuld obser-
ue holynes whiche wold much better be
come them. Here also sayth saynt Ber-
nard. That it is the synne of sacrylege/
where as the goodes of pore people be
not dystrybute/vnto them. For the eccle
syastical goodes be the patrymonye and
heritage of the poore people. And what
someuer the mynystres of the church do
take besyde̅s theyr symple and necessary
fode and apparayle it is vyolently stolen
frō the poore people as cruel sacrylege
And god ordeyned not that such as my-
nystre the gospell/ shuld therby desyre ry
ches or apparaile/but that they shuld be
contentyd to lyue with necessary fode &
apparaile/& not to seke prouocatiō vnto
pleasure of the body/not to receyue suche
apparayle wherwith they myght be tri-
myd/but such wherewith they myght be
coueryd. But nowe whan a man may be
contentyd with suche a necessarye lyuig
what creature in this worlde wold enter
in

in to relygyon to that intēt that he wold gather together kepe and dyspend the stypendes of the clergye in to vses of plesure curyosyte and vanyte. Hereof agayne spekyth that blessyd saynt Bernard sayinge thus. The nakyd and hungry do cry and complayn on this facyon. what auaylyth vnto vs miserably vexid with hungre and cold/the great chaung of garmentes that lye in pressys and are eten of Mothis. It is ours that ye consume and wast/ it is cruelly stolen from vs/ that ye vnprofytably and wyckidly dyspend. O ye curyous and delectable persones ye haue wherewith we myght be refressyd/ and we pore people can not fynde wherwith we shuld be susteigned. And furdermore god moste ryghtwyse and sapyent made al wordly goodes cōmyn to euery man hauynge nede/ and that euery man shulde conuenyently vse them accordynge to his estate/ soo that as towchynge/ the vse/ all temporall goodes shulde be in commune/although that concernynge the ryght and tytle of possessynge & dyspensynge of them/some men haue propertye in some goodes.

And as sayut Thomas affirmyth in his boke callyd Secunda secũde/in this maner what socuer any man superfluously conuersyth to his owne vse / or what so euer he reserupth nygardly/or geteth immoderately / he stelyth it away from the poore people/and incurryth the synne of theft or robbry / ye and the daungere of other greuous cruelte as wilhelm⁹ parisiensis & Ulrich⁹ with de wytnesse and declare. For this purpose also ye blessyd father Ambrose makyth protestacyon of that thyng that is had in the decre in the xxvii.distinction/in the chapitre begynnyng sicut hi / i this maner of wyse whether god be so iust / so inequalle to distribute the substydyes and sustynaunce of lyfe(that is to say)that thou shuldyst be rych and abundaunt & other veray poore and nedy: Or dyd he suffer it to be so/ to thentent that thou myghtz haue a prose of his lyberalyte/and to glorifie another thorugh the vertue of pacience or sufferaunce/ but thou therfore receiuynge the gyftes of god/ & bestowyng them to thy nowne vse/thynkyst thou dost nothyng iniustly/yf thou alone do obteygne or reserue the substaunce of lyfe of many creaturys. O what creature can fynde in

is hart

is hart to be so vncharitable and so coue
tous to dyspende the norysshement of so
many pore people/ not only to his owne
pryuate vse/ but also to his great habun
daunce delyte and pleasure. And truly it
is no lesse synne to take away from hym
that hath/than to denye the nedy whan
a man is habundaunt and may geue.
That thou withholdyst/is the fode & bred
of them that be hungry. Thyne apparay
le that thou putyst vp is the clothyng of
them that be nakid. Thy money which
thou hydyst in the erthe/and dyst enclose
in thy cofer is the veray redemption of
men beynge in calamyte mysery & capty
uyte. Therfore thou mayst knowe howe
thou walowyst in the goodes of other
men / and howe prosperous thou art in
respecte of them / and yet wylt not leue
or depart with them / with this thynge
especially y^e sayeng of Basili^s aggreith.
If thou wylt confesse that the temporal
ryches came to thy handes by the gyfte
of god/ shall god therfore be reputed vn=
iust/ for dystrybutynge the goodes vnto
vs/not indifferētly/by cause thou hast to
muche & another hath to lytyll. Nay but
to thentēt that thou shuldyst obteigne of
a iuste dispensatour & that they neybour

shuld be rewardyd for his pacyence it is the brede of the hungry that thou withholdyst the cote of the bare that thou kepest in preuey chamber / the shoe of the bare fote that rottyth in thy house / the money of the nedy that thou possedist in the erth and cofers. Therfor thou doste great iniury to so many poore people as thou art able to geue or lend vnto. Let my masters the regulars and mynystres of the churche to whom one benefyce is not competent and sufficient / marke wel this. Let such note and consydre the necessyte of the poore people / that haue soo many precious garmẽtes and furres lyeng in theyr chambers / that make theyr gold and syluer theyr god / and treasour that voluptuosly and sumptuosly do aldayes of theyr lyfe cõsume & waste it. Let them loke howe they can make accompt therof vnto the hygh iudge of heuẽ / whose membres they dayly suffer to perysshe by hungre / thyrst / nakydnes / and cold to whom also they geue nother harborow nor beddynge. Therof also it is spoken in the boke callyd. Summa virtutum et vitiorũ in this wyse. Mynystres of the churche do greuously and many maner of weys offend in theyr apparayle.

Fyrst in the exceedyng preciousnes there of. Secondaryly in tenderues. Thyrdly in curyousnes. Fourthly in superfluyte therof. For as blessyd Johan the Baptyst sayth who so hath two coates that is to say / one that he hath no nede of / let hym geue it to one that hathe none.
Therfore trymmyng/ and deckynge/ apparayle is to be auoyded of regulars & mynystres of the church/ which before is towchid in the fourth chapitre that they shuld were close garmetes not ouer long nor short / and also there it is prohybyte that in nowyse they may were red or grene clothe except in theyr ornamētes pertaynyng to dyuyne seruyce. Furdermore it is red amōg the myracles of gloryouse saynt Jerome that a certayne cardynal nampd Andreas beyng dede shulde haue ben eternaly cōdemned/ except saint Jerome by intercessyon had obteigned the restorynge agayne of the bodye vnto the soule/ to do penaūce and satysfaccyon in this present lyfe/ & especyally forbycause he meruelowsly exceedyd in his apparayle yet notwithstandynge otherwyse he was a veray chast and clene man and also endyd with many goodes and commendable vertues.

That

The lyfe That in nowyse women may dwell with regulars or mynystrers of the church cõstitute in holy ordres except they be be ray old and nere of kynrede.

☞ The. xii. Article. ☜

EXPERIENCE is the maistres of trewth. Therfor what nedyth it manifoldly to prove that thyng that experyence shewith. For evidētly it apperyth by good profe/ how many and enorme myschefes howe/ hurtefull occasyons howe great ruyne and dyffor myte (worthy to be lamentyd) haue sprong by the reason of the cohabytacyon and dwellynge of women with prestis and regular persons in somuch that now from the crowne of the hede to the sole of the fote there is in a maner no helth (that is to say) frō the highest vnto the lowyst in a maner no clennes or chastyte. But it is as the prophet Oseas hath prophesyed. That fornicacyon and aduoutry hath swymmyd al about wherby it apperith how daungerous such cohabytacions is and worthy to auoyde/ with howe great reason also and

and discrecyon/holy fathers Popes/byſ
ſhopes/and other in many generall coũ-
celles haue the ſame prohybyted. And
truely the more ſtraytly and vehemẽtly
that it is prohybite vnto high and noble
prelates the more dyſobedyence contẽpt
and necligence is in them yf it be not a-
uoyded. Therfore certayne decrees of the
generall councelles of popes / byſſhopes
& other be veray neceſſary to be touchyd
and ſpokyn of to declare how ſagely/ ho
ly and dyſcrete fathers haue abhorryd/
prohybyte and vtterly excludyd this for
ſeyd cohabytacyon / or dwellynge with
women. It is rede that concernyng this
matter/it was fully prouyded at the coũ
cell of Magũtyne. That no preſt or cler
ke ſhulde kepe or retayne any women
wherby euyll ſuſpicyon myght be had
betwene them/nor yet ſuch maner of wo
men as theyr rulys wole graunt them/
that is to ſay/that mother/ aunte/ or ſy-
ſter/for by the the inſtygacyon of the de-
uyl it hath be perceuyd that abhomyna-
ble offence hath be don with them/or els
with theyr waytyng maydens. But the
ſtraytnes of this decree was afterward
ſomewhat loſyd as touchyng veray olde
women & nere kynnyſfolke vpon whom
nature

nature or age wyll not suffer any synny-
ster acte to be suspectyd. Hereuppon In
nocentius the thyrd wrytynge to a cer-
tayn byshop sayth. That ye ought not
to suffer women to inhabite with clerkz
except suche (as before is sayd) in whom
the law of nature wyll no euyl suspecte.
Therto also the blessyd Pope Gregori
sayth in this wyse / we wyll and forbyd
that clerkes prestes or regulars be not
conuersant nor dwellyng with women /
except with theyr mother/syster/ or such
other. It is red and also dyscussyd in the
regystre that blessyd Augustyne dyd not
agre that one shuld be in howse with his
owne suster sayenge thus. Suche as be
with my syster be not my systers. Ther-
fore that vnderstanding of so great a ler
nyd man ought to be an instruccyō vnto
vs. Saynt Gregori sayeth agayne that
it is declaryd in the decree in the. lxxxi.
dystynccyon/ how it behouyth that pre-
stes (to whom the people of god be com-
myttyd) do substācyally attēd vpō theyr
lordes flocke that it be not deuowryd of
deuylls nother I ought to kepe sylence ī
that thīge that I do shew vnto you with
great lamētacyon and sadnes. For I do
perceue prestz inhabityng with women/
whiche

whiche is an abhomynable thyng to be hard or spoken of & contrary to the estatutes of theyr holy rulys and ordynaunces For loke where suche cohabytacyon is / there lackyth no prouacatyon or attẽptyng of our enymye the deuyl. Therfor they ought to be seuerid lest the frawde of the inuisible enemy discrye them so that (accordyng to the wordes of the Apostle) our seruice may not be despysed / for he sayth thus. we prestes ought to be ware of all vnlawful actes / that we may lyft vp clene handes vnto almyghty god (which sayth) be you holy for I am holy And truly yf ony man presumyth to do contrary / let hym be excludyd from the honour of presthode. Furdermore it is induced in the actes of the generall coũcel of Nice in this wyse. Aboue al thyng the generall councell forbyddeth that it is not lawful to any byshop / prest / decan or subdecon / nor to ony other in the clergy to haue or kepe any woman in his howse (that is to saye) to inhabyte or dwell with ony woman (as Eratianus expoundyth in the Rubrikes) except with the mother / syster or aunte or with such persones as wyll auoyd suspycyon.

The

The veray same thynge was cõmaun-
dyd in the Councell of Carthago for
there Sciricius then Pope sayd. we
wyll suffre no other women to be in the
houses of clerkes but suche as the holy
counsell of Nice hath sufferyd to inhaby
te with them/for certaine causes only of
necessyte. Moreouer holy fathers dyd
not only prohybyte cohabytacyon with
women/ but also suspectyous visitacyon
and cõmunycacyon with them. This al
so is conteigned in the syxth synode or
councell. It is cõuenient to be obseruyd
of al clerkes/that they neuer comyn and
talke with a woman exceptat a coue-
nyent tyme and place/to the entent that
all myschcuous suspycyon may be auoy
ded. Surely no maner of religyon may
permyt & suffer them to come to gether
alone. This is also rehersed in the syxth
councell Affrykan. Clerkes or chast men
may in nowyse resort to wydowes or vir
gyns except by the cõmaũdement of byf
shopes or prestes / and yet they shall not
alone/ but they shal go with theyr clerkꝭ
or with other which the byshop or prest
hym selfe may not vnto womẽ alone re-
sort for fere of suspeccyõ. Therfore pope
Lutius saieth. A clerke shal not go alone
without

without his superiors cõmandmẽt vnto the howse of a woman. And a prest and a woman may in nowyse talke to gether alone. Nor the Archedeacane may vnder the coloure of humylyte or of his office / oftentymes entre into the howses of women / nor sende any thynge to the good wyf preuely by theyr scolers / or howsehold seruauntes. For yf that be cõmyttyd and knowen / he shalbe depolyd from his office. And she shalbe suspendyd from the graces of the churche. Therfore bycause prestes are sufferyd to cohabyte and dwell with women that be of theyr kynrede / it is to be supposed that no other prohybytyd women ought to inhabyte with theyr kynneswomen.

And for that cause prestes and regulars cohabytyng with theyr mothers or kynneswomẽ must take hede that no estrãge women dwell with theyr kynneswomen except they be veray olde and agyd.

Seynge also this cohabytacyon is soo straytly prohybyted / that no preste or clerke although he were chast in dede ought suche cohabytacyon to admyt for any hope of tempozall auauntage whiche thynge he wyll surely fulfyll / yf he haue any prest or persone relygious vn-

der hym whiche he ought to ouerſee. And alrough it were ſure / that he ſhulde neuer be prouyd of the part of the wom̃ yet it ought to be ſerched/leſt yͤ woman be prouyd of his part.

That chaſtite of body and clennes of hart do pryncypally become preſtes and regulars.

The.xiii.Article.

STERE it is/ that no man may pleaſe God or obteyne blyſſe/ without clennes of hart inſomych/that our ſauyour ſayth. Bleſſyed they that be clene of hart for they ſhall ſe the face of god. wherof alſo Salomon ſayth. He that louyth clennes of hart ſhall haue a kyng to his frende. where of in lyke maner the Apoſtle ſayd / vnto the kyng of worldes immortall and inuiſyble on this faſyon. Euery feythfull Chriſten man is bounde to chaſtyte/other virgynall/ conjugall/or vidu all/ or to ſuche chaſtyte that is abſtynence from all vnlawfull congreſſyon. Furdermore the mynyſtres of the churche be many

many wayes bounde vnto Chastyte.
Fyrste bycause in theyr fyrste consecra-
tion / or promotion to holy ordres / they
haue straytly by vowe & promyse bound
thē selfe vnto chastyte. And as it is copy
ously declaryd in theyr decree. No man
ought to be promotyd vnto prestehode /
nor yet to take vpon hym ony holy or-
dres that be inferyor vnto prestehode / ex
cept he do promyse and vowe chastyte /
and that chastyte is not only vtwardly
promysed / but also inwardly / insomuche
that they bynd them selfe to obserue all
the holy rulys and decrees of the same.
For verely a vowe doth more substaun-
cyally bynd / than an othe / as sayn̄t Tho
mas in his boke callyd Secūda secunde.
Joannes Bartholomeus and other / do
wytnesse / and as Alexander / Bonauen-
tura and other / that do wryte vpon the
fourth boke of ye sentence sayen. A vowe
by relygyous professyon and takynge of
holy ordres / is solemnyzed & made veray
solenme in effecte whiche also strongly
byndyth a mā to the perfourmyng therof
& lykewise vnto spirituall cōuersacyon in
somuch that it wyth not only phibyt & let
them to contracte matrymony / but also
dissolueth and breakyth that matrimo-

ny that is alredy contracted/for in suche a solemne vowe a man promyseth not only to do well and eschew euyl/but also he muste fulfyll his vowe in seuerynge hymselfe from wordly and carnall thynges and also in applyenge dyuyne & spyrytuall thynges. Therfor prestes regulars & other in the takyng of holy ordres they geue and offer them selfe to god / to the entēt that they wyll do hym feythful and dylygent seruyce / and therfore they be consecrate to theyr maker/and ordeyned to be his mynystres. The violent takynge and vsurpynge of other mennes goodes/is theefte/yf it happen to be done preuely. And truly robbrye openly done and also the abusyon of holy thynges is callyd sacrylege. Also robbynge or spoylynge of thyngs cōsecrate vnto god may be very well iudged sacrylege. Therfore prestes and mynystres of the church doynge forny cacyon do cōmyt sacrylcdge / sacrylcdger ye sacrylcdge and hyghe robbrye / in withdrawynge them selfe from the seruice of god/from the actes of clennes/and shamefull obeyeng and geuyng them selfe to al maner of fowle stynkyng and abhomynable vyce & carnall desyre. wherfore yf stelyng or robbyng of a chaleys

leys be an horryble theft and sacryledge muche more abhomynable is the spoylynge or corruptyng of a reasonable creature offeryd/consecrate and geuen vnto god/as prestes be. Secondaryly chastyte pryncypally belongeth vnto mynystres of the churche/for this cause. For as holy Dionisius sayeth. The lowest of hygh ordre/and the hyghest of the lower ordre owght to be agreable and lyke/ now the lowest of the hygh hyerarchy or ordre is the company of holy aungeles. And the hyghest in the lower ordre of the church mylytaunt is the ordre of prestes and clerkes wherfore the prophet Malachie callyth a preste by the name of aungell/ for it is sayd. The lyppys of a preste dothe kepe lernynge/ and the people: shall loke for theyr lawe out of his mouth/for he is the aungel of the lord of hostes. Prestes therfore and Clerkes are bound to lyue purely/ & chastly lyke aungeles/but they agaynst all ryghtwysnes do inordynatly synne/ledynge theyr lyfe in carnall fylthy & bestly desyre. Thyrdly bycause they be in the place and stede of god/& as the vicars of god. Therfore they are straytly bound to lyue godly/ & not bestly & fylthylye/ orels they do gre-

nously offend agaist the charyte of god. Fourthly forby cause they be set in high dygnyte & had in greatter honour for ye loue of god/ therfore they ought to be acceptable to god/ & to serue hym in clēnes. Fyfthly forby cause they may please god reconsyle other vnto god/ and clence thē that be vnclene / therfore they are bound to please god with chastyte and clennes. And where saynt Bernard sayeth wo be to the chyldren of the deuyll whiche not beynge reconsyled themselfe / hath take vpon them the offyce to reconsyle other/ as though it were people that had done ryghtwysnes. And also the apostle affyrmyth the same sayeng thus. They that be in fleshe (that is to say) they that lyue carnally can not pleale god In the boke also of Ecclesiasticus thus it is sayd. Of an vnclene thynge what may be made clene. And in the .xii. chappytre of the prophet Naun. It is wryten thus. The prestes were clensyd & than they made clene the people. The syxte forby cause they do take/ handell/ & receue holy thynges/ ye that thynge that is holy of all holy/ whiche sayeth hymselfe. I am the lyuynge brede that descendyd frō heuyn. And fur

dermore

dermore yf it were so straytly ꝓhybyt in Moises law that no vnclene ꝑson shulde eate offerre or thouche any fleshly/or bestly sacryfyce / howe cursyd & myscheuous be they before the face of god/ whiche do take handell and put forth to other / the veray body/& blode of our sauiour Christ and only begotten sonne of god/ and yet they remayn in theyr abhominacion lyuynge wyckedly and fylthyly/& geuyng euyll occasyon to other / dyd not god by the mouth of Moises cōmaund that no prest shuld presume to mynistre vnto god except he were sanctyfyed. And also that a man beynge vnclene shulde not offerre bred vnto god. And in a nother place a corrupt soule which had eten of the sacrifice of good creatures shulde perylshe frō amōg the people. And ferther i the fyrst boke of kynges in the.xxi. chapytre it is red that a byshop sayd vnto Dauid i this wyse. I haue no vnhalowyd bred / but only holy bred / and yf the chyldren and seruaunies be clene(especyally from women) let them eate it / ye the prestes of the old lawe in the tyme of theyr offyce/ and sacryfyce were commaundyd to absteigne from theyr lawfull wyues.

Therfore howe great myschyefe cursydnes and vnshamfastnes is among prestz and clerkes whiche (walowyng in theyr fowle & abhomynable fylthynes) do hādell the most worthy and precyous sacramentes. Doth ther not (thynke you) hāge ouer theyr heedes an infynyte & more than a paynfull ponyshment? God knowyth. The seuenth is forbycause they be the eyes in the mystycal body of the hole churche and truly a lytyll spot or offence is veray hurtefull to the eye. The eyghte forbycause they be the glasse into whom the lay people shulde dyrecte theyr eyes/ whiche glasse ought to be veray clene & bryght. The .ix. is bycause the carnalyte of them is so abundaūt/ to the great iniurye/ and contēpt of almyghty god/ and geuyth so euyll occasyon vnto the people and also is more hurtful than can be supposed vnto all such offenders/ for it blyndyth and hardenyth them in vyce and in conclusyon damneth them. It makyth also suche vyle and cursyd creaturs/ to be despysed dysdayned and hated both of god & man. Furthermore after the meanynge of wilhelmus Parisiensis & other doctours/ such mynystres haue no ryght to the goodes of the church which be deputed

puted to the membres and lowdyars of Christ. And what soeuer they do vsurpe and spend of the patrymonye of Christe it is veray theste and robbrye. They be also straytly bound to restytucyon of all suche goodes as they dyspend amonge hores or harlottes or other fylthy persones/behold therfore howe synfull & daũgerous the lyfe of wanton and lecherous mynistres is. Therfore let them refrayn from the snares & gynnes of the dyuell / let thẽ also feare the great hepe of peryll and daunger that hangyth ouer them orels we may say to them as it is sayd in scripture. The people be without coũsell and wysdome / wolde to god they wolde ware wyse & vnderstãd/that they myght prepare to auoyde daunger in tyme to come.

¶ Of the peryll and improuydence of prestes and regulars dwellyngs with women/gatheryd out of the sayenges of many holy men.

The.xiiii.Article.

THEy do synne mortally (as saynt Augustin sayth) which put forth them selfe to stryfe or debate. And truly that mā doth clene contrary to wysdome (wherūto we be bound as well as to charite and iustyce) which presumyth to passe nyghe a brydge / from the whiche scantly one amonge an hundreth hath escaped without fallyng in / or drownig. In this case what man can say / but he dyd veray folyschly and was veray barreigne of wysdome / to put hymselfe in so great ieoperdy much rather may vnshā-fast prestes or regulares be countyd foles which contrary to theyr lawe wyll cohabyt and dwell with women from whom scātly one amōg a thousand shall escape without great peryl and daungere. And yf perauēture some do fortune to eschew the fowle & fylthy acte it selfe veray fewe can escape vnclene imagynacyon euyll prouocacion vnlawfull consent and sensualyte therof. wherfore they ought in nowyse to choabyte / or dwell with any women (except she be veray agyd / or of theyr nygh kynrede) nor cōtynual to behold any woman / nor to haue any oportunyte of tyme / or place to comyt any euyll acte with her. How be it yf he wer

such a one as were of synguler goodnes/ exercised and tride in the feare of god & al maner of vertue aboue the comō sorte of men/it were not possyble that he shuld by any mean excede/or be entāgled with any suche carnall desyre/ or eny wyse be moued from the purpose of chastyte. Is it not veray daungerous for a man not yet exercysed nor estabylysshed i grace & vertue/to inhabyte/ or dwell with a woman that is prohybyte. Let euery prest and clerke therfore take hede that no woman seldome or neuer do ons enter into theyr houses / for who so euer vysyteth the walkes / or steppes of womē can not inhabyte with god with a clene and hole hart. For a woman inflamyth the consciens of hym with whom she dwellyth.
Thou shalt neuer dispute/ or haue cōmunycacyon of the bewtye of women. But yf thou perceue a womā in good conuersacyon/loue her with spirituall affection and not w^t corporall vysytacyon. Therfor it is cōmaūdyd vnto prestz & clerkz i the .xxxiii. distynction that they shuld auoyd ouermuch familiarite w^t theyr kit folke inhabitynge w^t thē furdermore as saynt Jerome sayth. The sharper tormētes of hell be reserued vnto prestes and clerkz doyeng fornycacyon/ & ferder this

wo be to the beyng a preſt that hath kyſt the doughter of venus with the ſame mouth with whom a lytyll before thou dydyſt receue the ſonne of the Vyrgyn Mary. O curſyd Judas that with a kyſ ſe dooſt betray the ſonne of man. Therfor alſo glorypous ſaynt Jerome beynge in the extremyte of dethe in the preſence of the bleſſyd bodye yf our lord/ſpake vnto Chriſte ſayeng thus. wo be to them that receue the vnworthyly/for truly they do crucyfye the agayne to theyr great condemnation and punyſhment. Alas good lord what ſhall I ſay/forbycauſe preſtes do eate the in the altare/ as it were the fleſhe of byrdes or beſtes on a table/ bycauſe alſo in the nyght they vſe fylthy cõgreſſyon with women/& erly in the mornyng in theyr celebracion they w receue the/and eate the. Than good lord where art thou hyd doſt thou ſlepe or wake? Is ſuch ſeruyce accepted of the? Is that the ſacryfyce and oblation whiche thou deſyryſt. Behold the world is full of preſtes and yet ther is ſcantly one amonge an houndreth that is good and weldyſpoſyd. There is in the world none ſo cruell a beſte as an euyll and wanton preſte is for he dyſdaynyth to be correctyd & in no

wyſe

wyse wyll suffer to here the treuth. Therfore in the person of Christe spekynge sayut Augustyne in this wyse. O thou prest torment me nomore with thyn offences / for the wound of thy synne hurtyth me more (that is to say) dysplesyth me more / than the wound of my syde. Thou dost synne more greuously which offendyst me raynynge in leuyn with thy fornicacyon / and my body & blod vnreuerently handelyst / geuyng euyll occasyon and example vnto my people / for whose helth I dyd vouchsafe to be crucified on a crosse / than they which also crucyfyed me walkyng on the erth. Therfor o thou preste here holy saynt Bernard exhortyng and enformynge the / sayeng thus. O thou preste thy mouth is dayly made the receuer / and as ye wold say the sepulture of the blessyd body of Christ. Therfore why doth that mouth euer lye / why doth it euer speke lecherously why is that soule and mynd of thyne made vytious. wherfore do thyn yes behold vanytees / whiche euery day on the altare hath before them / Christe hym selfe the hyghe & euerlastynge treuth / why puttyst thou forth thy handes vnto thynges vnlawfull and vnclene / which do handell most

precyous

precyous and immaculate sacramētes / why swymmyst thou in the dronken stremys of wyne / whiche drynkyst the blod of our sauyour / & ouer oughtyst to be full of spirituall refresshyng. Is it not a fowle and myschenous acte for thē / to handell the shamcles bodyes of harlotes with such handes as be geuen / and dedycate vnto god ye consecrate also with holy anoyntment / and with the same handes to touch the holy body of our lord Jesus Christe. O how wycked & presumptuous it is to handell the sonne of the Virgyne Mary / ye the only begoten sonne of god the father / and hym to receue with so fyl thy a mouth whiche excellyth and ouer cummyth all vnderstandyng. what man wolde not be abasshyd to se the most precyous treasour in the worlde to be cast in to a doungbyll. For truly a Lecherous prest is more fylthy than any durt / or clay / and more stynkynge and corrupt than any synke / or drawght furdermore as saynt Jerome sayeth / and as it is red in the decree / no man ought for to eate of the easter lambe / or to be receuyd to the communyon at such tyme as he kno with his wyfe.

¶ The cause wherof saynt Thomas &

other

other vpon the fourth boke of sentence/ haue notyd saieng thus/that althowgh the carnall acte in wedlocke may be done without synne/yet by the plesure and voluptuosnes therũto annexed/it plockyth and withdrawith a mans mynd frõ deuocyon. Therfor yf it be not laful for maryed folke/whiche may vse the bodyly occupacyon without synne/to receyue thyr maker/ where the nyght before they haue carnally knowen yche other. Howe abhomynable do these prestes which cõmyttyng fornycacyon in the nyght/presume to celebrate in the day. Surely it may be conceuyd by no vnderstandynge nor by any tong it may be expressed how inordynatly such do offend which beyng polluted with so fowle vyce/ do presume to handel and recyeue the most pure and heuenly mysteryes of Christ/and to pronoũce the most holy wordz of the masse & canon therof with so corrupt a mouth. Therfore of suche thynges spekyth the hygh iudge Christ hymself by the mouth of the ꝓphet Ozeas sayeng thus. I wyl correcte thẽ at my pleasure/and thus beholde I wyll mete thẽ as it were a bere & lyones that had lost theyr whelpes and wyll destroye the inward parte of them & also wyll cõsume thẽ as it were a lyon.

Than as the ꝓphet Dauid this psal
mes sayth. He wyll speke vnto them in
his angre/and wyl vexe and trouble them
in his furor. He wyll thrust them in to
a fornace of fyre in tyme of his wrathe &
they shall haue no rest in theyr mysery.
And as the ꝓphet Ezechiell spekyth.
Beholde I haue clappyd my handes at
theyr malyce. Can your hart sustayne
or your handes preuayle in the tyme of
my punyssheme̅t: And thus I wyll blow
you and brenne you in the fyre of furor/
and you shalbe blowen in the myddis o
a fornace & than I wyll ceasse/of whom
also god by the ꝓphet Amos god spe-
kyth in this wyse. Beholde I wyll grate
vpon you/as a wayne wyl grate that is
laden with hey. And nowe by the ꝓ-
phet Malachias the word of god is spo-
ken vnto prestes that polute and corrupt
his name in this wyse. I wyll cast vpon
you the fylthes of your ceremonies/and it
shall take you with it (that is to say) I
wyll impute vnto you/your owne fylthy
& fleshly werkes/& you shall fall together
with your myschyef into the depe flod of
Acheon in hell. And the more intentyfly
ye were geuen vnto voluptuousnes and
carnal desyre/the more peynfully ye shal
be bornyd

be bornyd in most hote and wyld fyre for euermore/ in lyke maner as I haue spoken in the Apocalypsis/that is to say. The more they haue glorysyed thē selfe in delyte and plesure/ geue vnto them so much the more payn and torment.

¶ Of the same matter it apperyth in the reuelacyons of saynt Kateryne the virgin of zenis. And also of the holy wydowe saynt brygyde.

The.xv. Article.

IT is red in the boke of the wetryne & reuelacyons of saynt Kateryne of zenis that the euerlastyng father spake vnto her in a vysyon in this wyse. The soule of wrechyd and carnall prestes/ takyth great corruption of vyce by theyr sensualyte. And furder thus I haue anoynted and consecrate them to the entent that they shuld serue me in holynes & iustice/ and mynystre sacramētes vnto beleuers and wottyst thou my welbelouyd doughter howe they reward me for my benefycyall goodnes: I wyll tell the howe.

They do dayly persecute me with so many mischeuous actes/that it is impossible for thy tonge to expresse it. And yf thou dydyst here them all rehersed/ thou woldyst dye for verray sorow/yet I wyll shewe the some of them that thou mayst haue the more compassyon.

For verely they oughte to stand at the table of the moste holy crosse there incessauntly bryngе in medytacyon/ of the bytter passyon of Christ/and there them selfe to fede with the foode of soules/ labourynge contynually for the helth of them/euermore reioysynge in the spyrytuall profet of them. But they go into tauerns/and there they swere/and stare/ tellynge wanton tales/ seruynge Glotony/ and Dronkenes/ forgetynge theyr dyuyne scrupce/ but yf they chaunce to say it/ theyr hartes not withstandyng be farre from me. They be full of myserable vyce/ as it were men blyndyd in synne/ ye theyr wordes and dedes standyth alwayes of wantones/ they be not ashamyd to offende openly/ they be verray rybaldes/players/and mockers. But after they haue played away theyr soules/ so that it pertaynеth to the bodye of the dyuell/ than they play away the goodes of

the

the churche/and to expende the substaun ce(whiche they take in the name and ver tue of the blod of our saupour Christe) in theyr owne pleasurys so that the poze people be nothynge holpen therwith.
Nother the churche hath necessarye oz namentes / foz they beynge the tem ple of the dyuell / care not foz my tem ple and suche oznamentes as they shuld make in the churche/they make in theyr owne houses) ye and do wozse with it then that / foz loke howe the bryde gro me attyrpth his bryde/ ryght so these fle shly dyuels do attyre theyr fleshly con cubynes and perramours. And whan these vnhappy dyuelz (that is to saye) wanton prestes do passe vnto the altare/ they be nothyng abasshed to se theyr con cubynes oz harlottes goynge with theyr chyldren to do theyr oblacyon with o ther people. O ye dyuelles and wozse then dyuelles/wolde to god youre iniqui te were moze hyd vnder fote / foz than it shuld do lesse hurt vnto the lay subyectes But nowe truly ye be the veray occasy on of abhomynable lyuynge. Is this the puryte oz cleunes that I desyze in a preste.

Is this clennes/ whā he ryſyth with an vnchaſt mynd with a corruept & ſtynkig bodye with whom all nyght he lay with his deuyll or leman. O tabernacle of Be hebub/ wherein they weldyſpoſed wat chyng in the nyght whan contynually thou ſhuldyſt be deuoute i prayer at whi che tyme alſo thou ſhuldyſt vertuouſlye dyſpoſe they ſelfe to celebratyon on the morow. Therfore of carnall delyte it cō myth/ that theſe fylthy preſtꝫ do nother ſeke myne honour / the helth of thē ſelfe nor yet of theyr neybours. They wyll not correcte alſo ſuch as they haue cure & charge of/ but of theyr owne propre and pryuate affection wherwith they be en flamyd/ they coueyte and deſyre worldly ryches pleaſure of the body with whom yet they muſt haue temporall honoures delycate feaſtes and banketтys precious ſuperfluous and well trymmyd garmen tes of theſe preſtes therefore this holy & innocent virgyn ſaynt Katerync wrote many other thynges by the ſpeche and reuelacion of god/ wiche be brought in/ in another place.

¶ Moreouer there be many thyngꝫ red of theſe preſtes in the boke of the reuela cyon of the bleſſyd wydowe ſaynt Bry gyde

gyde where amonge other Christ in a vi syone spake vnto her on this facyō/ was it not sayd by the prophet Dauid howe they that haue eten my bread haue magnyfied supplantacyon aboue me/ yeuē so now I say to you. That fylty & lechero⁹ prestꝫ which eate my breꝺe on the altare/ be veray traitours vnto me. I behold ye Iewes & paynyms & I can ꝑceue amog thē none worse thā such prestꝫ. Therfore of the veray zele of iustyce/ I curse them. And cursyd be all thynge that they take of the erth to theyr ꝓffet or sustētacyon/ forbycause they be so vnkynd to god. Cursyd be theyr meate/ and drinke whiche fedeth theyr bodyes to wormes meate and theyr soules to hel (that is to say) they kepe the soules in theyr bodyes to theyr damnacyons. Cursyd be the bodyꝫ of them/ whiche shall ryse and brenne in hell without end. Cursyd be the yeres in whom they so viciously haue lyuen. Cursyd be that houre that begynnyth to thē inhell/ & shall neuer haue ende. Cursyd be ye eyes of thē with whō they haue sene the lyght of the fyrmament. Cursyd be the eares of thē that hath hard my wordes/ and not fulfylled them. Cursyd be the taste of them wherwith they haue

perceyued my gyftes. Cursyd be the touchynge of them / that haue touchyd me vnworthyly. Cursyd be the sauour of thē that haue smellyd thynges for theyr owne delyght/and despysed me/that am most delectable of all thynge. Amonge these cursyd prestes there raygneth couetyse auarice slewth symony/ hatred/obstynacy/ carnall pleasure/ the loue of the world / and yet with worldly thynges they are not satysfyed. They preche my worde and seme to do many good thynges/ but all is to theyr owne honour and comodyte. Holy sancte Brigitte reherseth many mo thynges lyke vnto these whiche nowe for this purpose we haue sufficyently touchyd bycause in the boke of the lyfe and rules of curates they be more largely declaryd.

¶ That regulars & all men constitute in holy ordres are boūd to bevertuous & holy gathered out of the sayēg of holy Dionysius. ☙ The.xvi. Article. ❧

THe holy & most dyuyne Dionysi⁹/ saith. That no man ought to presume to be a leder in ony dyuyne office or scruyce/ but such as be most lyke or veray nyghe facyoned vnto god i vertue(that is to say) so wyse and vertuous that of the plētuousnes of thē other may

be clensed lyghtened & with vertue replenysshed where vpon saite Thomas vpō the fourth boke of sentence in the. xxiiii. dystynctyon concludyth & Albertus affirmyth the same. That where euery man in holy ordres/is cōstitute a leder ī other dyuyne matters / yf he presume to take vnworthyly that ordre vpon hym / he synnyth dedly. In lyke maner he that is constitute in holy ordres / wether he be prest/decane/or subdecane/as oftentyme as he executyth any acte of his holy ordre vnworthily/so oftētymes he synnyth dedly/ as it were a man that had no charyte nor yet grace. The same thyng Durand⁹ in his boke callyd summa raymūdus / Johannes Bonauētura and other agreably do affyrme. Therfore holynes of lyfe is aswel required vnto the taking of holy ordre/ as to the execution and demynystracion of the same by cause of the cōmaundmēt & not by cause of the sacrament/herewith aggreyth the sayenge of that deuoute Dionysius in a certayn epistle whiche he wrote ad demophilū sayeng thus. Any man not weldissposyd nor vertuous/vnworthyly executing thyngs that be holy shewyth hym to be veray presumptuous / and a man supposynge

that god is ignorāt of that/that he knowith(that is to say)he thynkyth yᵉ god (whom lyke a lyer he callyd father)doth dote or mystake his wretchednes or vice I wyll not say that such a on doth(lyke a Christen man) shew forth prayers / or orysons vpon the holy syngnes that is to say the sacramentes. Upon whiche wordes the doctours before rehersed do conclude/that such a prest/decane/or sub decane/ is taken as a blasphemour deceuour & traytour vnto Christe. Therfore (seyng regulars be in some holy ordre)it apperyth howe vertuous and clene they ought to be / aud howe obedyently they ought to excecute theyr offyces. wherby also they be boūde to geue good example vnto the people / and that theyr neyghbours shulde be parttakers of the abundaunce of theyr vertu and grace.&c.

¶ Of the qualyte of regulars gathered out of the sayenges of saynt Bernard.

The.xvii. Article.

The holy and elect saynt Bernard/ the louer of regular bretherne / a fauourer of the publyk wele/ auoydour & assistour of the church/ oftētymes in his bokes descrybyth and lamentyth the

the great ruyne / & decay of the churche. But amonge all other / especyally he bewayleth the lapse and fall of regulars. He sayeth also that Clerkes (above all men) do principally vsurpe and exercyse that thynge wherein is their delyte: and vtterly auoyde ꝑ thynge that shulde be paynfull vnto thē. And no doughte euery kynd of people hath some labour / & some pleasure but now adayes ye may perue & meruayle at the ꝓfession of Clerkes / how by a newe meanes they can dyscerne the pleasure from the payne / chousyng & embracyng all thynge for their delyte / and vtterly auoidyng all thynge that is greuous and peynfull. They compare with soudyars tuskers of the worlde in pryde / noble apparaunce / trappynge of horses or mules / hūtynge / hawkyng / dyce / cardes / ye thy begynne to counterfet womē in werynge precyous furres hangynge donne on their neckes in swete odours in gloryous garmentes ye in all maner of tenderncs. Ful craftely they refrayne from weryng of harnes / frō watchyng all nyght in pauylyons / from sodeygne / skyrmysches.

¶ The husbandman swetyth the keper of the vyneard dyggyth / and deluyth

And clerkes which syt sluggysshly in idel nes at the fruteful tyme of the yere/ w cō maunde theyr barnes to be stuffyd theyr buttryes to be replenysshed before the husbandmē. They eate fyne white bred. They drinke pure wine / they franke thē with the fattenes of corne / they couеyt the sauour of straung and swete herbes. Marchaunтes do sayle about the see in grete labour / both in daūgere of body & lyfe gathering ryches that by wracke or mysaucnture they may lese these are sore thynges. Our ryche prestes wyll be= ware of them / for they wyll slepe in the meane space. I wyl not say they play ye wantons in theyr beddes/ furdermore o= ther craftesmē geate theyr lyuyng with sore laboure/ but idell clerkes wallowe & swymme in ryches & pleasure without labour/ or payne/ but at the last whan al men shall aryse euery man in his ordre/ where(thynke ye)this generacion shall be appointed. If they torne to kynyghtes or sowdyars. They wyll beate thē away in lyke maner husbandmen/ marchaun= tes/ and all other craftes men wyll dryue them away frō theyr partes/ bycause they haue not labouryd as they haue done. But than what remaynеth.

Infayth

Inkayth that suche (whom euery ordre doth forsake and accuse) must be appoynted vnto a place where is no ordre / But euerlastynge fere and trouble. Therfore saynt Bernard sheweth in his thyrd boke callyd (de consideratione) that clerkes be out of all ordre / sayinge thus. what meanyth it that clerkes wyll be of one facyon / and yet wylbe countyd to be of another / for in theyr apparayle they be sowdyars or ruffiars in theyr gaynes or lucre they are veray clerkes / but in dede they appere to be nother / for they fyght not as sowdyars / & theyr techynge and conuersacyon is not lyke clerkes / howe may we knowe of what ordre they be / whan they wyll be of both ordres / but truely they destroy and confund bothe. The blyssed apostle sayd thus euery mã shall aryse in his ordre. In whiche (thynke ye) shall these aryse. whether they that haue offendyd without ordre shall perysche without ordre. Or yf it be supposed that the most true / and rygh twyse God wyll forsake (from the hyghest vnto the lowyste) all them that be out of ordre. I feare lest they shall be ordred in no other place but where euerlasting horrour / fere / & trouble with inhabite

Forsoth

Forsoth they be not frendly spouses whi che feare not to retayne thynges assigned vnto to church to theyr owne priuat vse and professet. And suche as ought to prepare tabernacles in heuen both for them self and other / thy procure herein the erth houses vpon houses lande vpon land/ & cōtrary to the doctryne of Christ they mucke vp mony & treasure in this world/ where as nature is cōtentid with a lyttyll. But they do not only seke a necessary lyuyng by the goodz of ye church which they may obtayne with small peryls/ but also they desyre to be honouryd they study to please man & not god/ to be proud & full of plesure/ in euery poit to be cōformable to this world. It is not charyte/ but a couetousnes that is straunge to god/ which inducyth al mē to gete pryuate honour/ or ryches in substaunce/ or ordres of ye church/ or els to seke plesure of ye body (that is to say) such thyngz as be theyrs/ & not such thingz as be Christz what meane they to be so fole hardye.
Howe chaunsyth it that they be so mad/ where is the feare of god/ where is the remembraunce of deth/ where is the feare of the paynes of hell / where is the lokynge for the terryble day of iudgment.
The

The spouses cryeth to the heuenly spouse in this maner. Take me with the/ we wyll runne in to the sauour of thyne oitmentes. Nowe euery man takyth his owne pleasure/ and folouyng the sauour of foule lucre/ they suppose gaines to be goodnes/ the damnation of whom is right wyse.

¶ Of the moste strayte and terryble iudgement of god vpon clerkes had out of the wordes of glo ryous saynt Bernard.

HOly sait Bernard speakyth of this matter sayeng thus/ wo be to the beig a clerke/ deth is in thy cuppe deth is in thy delyte and plesure/ forbycause thou eatest & drynkyst the synnes of ye people(that is to say) thou eatest/ & drynkest the goodes of the churche offeryd of the people to purge thē from synne. Thou reknyst to haue therewardes of the churche for god a mercy. Thou sungyst for them/ but better it were for the to begge & labour except by thy iust conuersacyon in all thynge/ thou do satysfy god for the offences of thy foundars and benefactours. Therfore be thou sad and circumspecte to do frutes of penaunce to

shed

shed cõdygne teres for theyr offences as
though thou shuldyst make accompt for
them: orels thou knowyst that the syn-
nys of the people(whiche now thou ac-
countyst among thy pleasurys/nothynge
regardyng them as though they belon-
gyd not vnto the) wyll be layed to thy
charge. O the great depnes of the iudge
mentes of god/O how terryble is god in
his counsaylys to the chyldren of men.
O wretchis it wylde to late for you to
say vnto the hylles. Fal ye vpon vs and
couer vs with downs. For ye shall come
before the iudycyall barre of Christ/and
the greuous complaynt of the people
shalbe hard agaynst yow/ the sore accusa
tion of thē by whose almes and stypen-
des ye were sustayned and haue not was-
shed away the synnys of them to whom
ye were veray blynd leders and dysceyt-
full medyatours. O thou fole what ple-
sure fyndyst thou than in thy delycyous-
nes/how do thy ryches delyte thyn eyes
wherewith thou hast bought the so ter-
ryble a iugement / soo intollerable and
eternall ponyshment / & hast bound thy

selfe vnto

selfe vnto so straye an accompt/ forwhy all that thou hast vnto the last farthyng shalbe taken away from the / but nowe let regulars marke what the holy anoynted saynt Bernard(beyng taught by the holy ghost)wrote vnto one Falco a wel: disposed regular haupnge no more but one benefyce / whiche Falco also afterward was made a bysshop sayeng thus. Thou rysyst vp at vygylles / thou goyst vnto masses / thou vsyst the quere bothe in the houris of the nyght and eke of the day. This doyeng thou dost well and takyst not the prebendes of the churche for nothynge/ for it is mete that he that serueth the altare do lyue by the altare. I wyll he shulde lyue by the altare / but I wyll not that he shulde be prowd/lecherous/ nor ryche/ nor by the goodes of the clergye of a poore man to be made a ryche man / nor of a meane man to be made a glorypous man. Of the goodes of the churche he may buylde hym no great palayes no precyous maners/or dwellynge houses. Curyously kerued/ peynted / or gylted / he may gather no bagges of money too gethere / he maye not

destroy and

destroye and expend the goodes of the poore people in such vanyte or superfluyte / he may not exalte or pmote his newewes / or kynsfolke with the goodes of the churche / and I was about to say / he shuld not mary his sonnes / or doughters therwith / but now let it passe. It is grãtyd vnto the (yf thou serue the altare) that thou shalt be sustenyed by the altar but to the entent that thou shuld bye the no golden brydels / paynted sadles / syluer spurys / soft and fyne furres of chaungeable colours / to be set in ryche apparell / and to hange aboute theyr neckys & vpõ thyr handes. Than we muste conclude that what soeuer thou retaynest of the goodes of the churche / except necessary fode and apparayle / it is not thyne / but it is theft robbry and sacryledge. Alas what man in the begynnyng of the estate of regulars wolde haue thought that they wold haue tumblyd downe in to so great ruyne. But whan a lytyll and a lyty man began more greuously to offend so that boldenes had hardened his harte in vice without shame / insomuch that he feryd it not / than this desperate / vnhappynes began. For a wycked preest whan he cõmyth vnto the bottom of synne / set

tyth not

tyth not a poynt therby / nor fearyth to
presente hymselfe to the face of god/bold-
ly entryng into the church / as yf it were
an howshold seruaũt/than he goyth into
the quere/he knyleth downe and kyssyth
the altare with a theuysshe mouthe / he
thynkyth that he doth craftely/but how
openly is his iniquyte foũd to his great
hatered in the syght of god/ so than som
of them do fall from fornycacyon/ to in-
cest and aduoutrie/but wold to god they
had not fallen to the affeccyons of igno-
mynye/and abhomynable lyuyng. Fur-
thermore of these regulars holy sayncte
Bernard wrote many other thynges of
the ambytyon/and desyre of promotyon
of clerkes / and how they be asshamed to
be contentyd with a sufficyent prebende
but euermore they brethe to hygher dyg
nyte/ tyll at the last/ they fall downe as
depe as the dyuel/and no meruayle that
so cursyd conuersatyon is in the churche
amonge them constitute in holy ordres/
for they enter not into them by Christe
but by symonye / & many other peruerse
intencyons / seekyng god in pleasure and
idelnes/ lyuynge in vanyte and worldly
desyre/ not seruynge god in sanctyte and
iustice / or procedyng to god by a strayte

or narowe waye of helth/hauynge more respecte vnto thynges temporall than spirituall/ furdermore as holy saynt Bernard sayeth. Euery where men runne hedlonge in to holy ordres without any reuerence or consideratyon / and yet it is a mystery worthy to be honourably mynystred of spirituall angels. But nowe adayes they make men prestes in whom auarice reygneth/ambytyon gouernyth pryde hath dompnacyon / but iniquyte and leehery beryth moste rule. After this facyon they couete & runne to the dygnytees and charges of the churche / as though they ought to lyue without charge / whan they come to theyr honoures and charges. Truly they do not ponder the bourdone annexyd vnto the charge/ nother they do beholde what iudgement they stande in. whom veryly (the more negligent they be in theyr accompt/ the more at lybertye and pleasure that they lyue) the more intollerable shall theyr dãnacyon approche vnto them.

¶ How they ought to pray/ syng/ and say the seruyce of almyghty god.

Forbycause

For bycause it is the chyefe exercyse of regulars (or els it ought to be) continually to be occupied in orysons & prayse to god/and in syngynge theyr diuine howres. Therfore we shall breuely touch how god ought to be lawdyd and prayed vnto. But in the meanetyme/I purpose somwhat to declare howe incessantly and feruently we haue nede to call vpon god. First it apperyth of the part of the place wherein we do dwell. For ye know we inhabyte in this wyked world as in a great eryle/in a vale of terys and mornynge in a fylde fully beseged with most cruel craftye and stronge enemyes/ by whom we be dayly in great peryll & daungere/for our inuisible aduersaryes do neuer slepe/but euermore they ley awayte and go aboute to cast vs downe in great aduersyte & with them to wrappe vs in eternall damnation. And truly we be veray brytyl and weke to resyst them. Therfore aswell of the parte of the place as of the parte of ye daũgere & gynnes in whom we be dayly set & cõuersaunt & also of the parte of our gostly enemyes/we haue greate nede to fle vnto God/with prayer/and moste affectuously to desyre his helpe comfort and defence.

Especially and forbycause we do dayly & euery where bryngе with vs our domesty call aduersary (that is to say) our owne bodye whiche greuyth our soule depres-syth our vnderstandynge / and besydys that inducyth a thousand impedymētes of spiritual profet. Secondaryly it appe ryth howe feruently it behouyth to pray god for a great cause the which we haue to do with hym before hand. And this is the matter/forbycause we haue despysed to take eternall damnation. Therfore of ryght we ought to serue god/and therby to obteyne euerlastyng ioy. And ferther yf men so affectuously and lamentably de entrete/for the conseruation & defence of this short and present corporall lyfe. yf also people do so mekely and instaūtly desyre god for worldly prosperyte/ howe much more mekely / and feruently doth it become vs to besech the mercy of god for escappyng perpetuall damnatyon/ for vertue also to preuayle agaynst all temp tatyons/for the obteynig of euerlastyng helth/for euery gyfte of grace necessarye to combye and deserue so great and infi-nyte blysse. Thirdly it apperith for that: that so oftentymes and so greuously we haue offendyd god / and dayly do dysho-

nour

nour hym. Therfore Climacus sayeth that by cõsideration of them that be gylty of deth/ ye may lerne howe ye ought to pray vnto god. For yf theues or murderers beynge taken by a prynce/or great man/ haue ony hope or truste to escape/ they wyll knele downe byfore hym whõ they haue offendyd & with great humylyte and feruent affectyon desyre pardon promysyng to amende and that euer after vnto the tyme of deth they wyll humble them selfe and be veray dylygent to ds that prince or great man veray fayth full seruyce/ much more we abhomynable wretchis/ whiche tymes innumerable haue deserued eternall damnatyon/ ought after the same maner to cal vpon god euerlastyng/which grauntyth hope to them that be penitent and promyseth pardon to them that be contryte. Furder more we may ponder a part by god hym selfe and by his maieste/ howe and after what facyon we oughte to pray vnto hym. For fyrst yf we cõsyder the infynite maieste/dignite/holynes/ and honour of god most blessyd & gloryous/ we oughte to desyre hym of pardon with al reuerẽce subiection/and humylyte. For yf the mynystres of kyngs & prelates in this worlde

do so meekely/reuerently/& lyke subiectes worshyp them/muche more we ought to do honour and reuerence(and not without great humylyte & subiection) vnto the euerlastyng/and most incomparable kynge of heuen/ moreouer considerynge yᵉ most fauorable goodnes of god beholdyng vs/we ought to cal vpon his grace with a dylygent custodie of hart/ with a veray circumspecte attendaunce to ponder the sense of our wordes/thynkyng vtterly to refrayne from all vnfruytfull dygressyon. Considerynge also the infynyte mercy and reward of god/we ought to pray vnto hym with great hope and cõfidence. And ferther in consideracyon of godly iustice we ought to pray vnto hym with feare & tremblyng/moreouer considerynge our owne transgressyon & offences/we ought to pray vnto hym/with inward contrytion meekely knowledgynge our offences/to our great profet. And truly cõsideringe our owne necessyte/infyrmyte/& redynes to vyce & myschyef/ we ought euermore with sore sighyng & lamentacyon to desyre his grace of mercy for as our sauyour hymselfe sayeth . It behoueth for to pray and neuer ceasse. Considerynge also our owne small deseruyng we ought louyngly & wᵗ great me-

knes to call vpon god puttyng our only feyth hope and trust in his mercy / euyn as creatures of veray small and weke power. Of these consideracyons for the most parte it apperyth/how attētyfly/reuerently/distinctly/affectuously/plesaūtly to god/ferefully/ mekely/purely/ ⁊ dyscretly we ought to lawde ⁊ honour god in syngyng. Therfor sayeth saynt Bernard in this wyse. Most welbelouyd brethern/alwayes I exhort you/ yᵗ boldly ye appere in your diuine seruice/ ⁊ that duely/ ⁊ reuerently ye resort vnto it/not slowly heuily or slepīgly not sparīg your voices whā ye shuld syng/not ꝓnoūcing halfe wordes ⁊ somtyme eskyppyng the hole/not sowning thē softly as it were a womā that sang thorowgh the nose/but to ꝓnoūce such holy ⁊ gostly wordꝫ wᵗ a manly brest ⁊ affectiou/with so good dysposytion that ye shuld seme to imagyne or thinke that thing yᵗ ye sang/ but alas there be many regulares nowe a daies in that point foūd greatly ī defaulte/ for they syng to rasshely not pawsing in the middis/nother reuerētly nor ferefully stā ding lyke good dyscyples before god/but sone absenting thē self frō diuine seruyce cōming tarde into the quyre/but yet wyl go out wyth the fyrst. I.iiii. And

And howe can they be intentyfly gyuen to the fence of fuch goftly wordes/ whan they pronunce them fo haftely and indiſcryntly / but wolde god that they wolde harken to this that is fayed of them. Curſyd is that man/that with the werke of god negligently. And alſo that which god ſpake by the prophet Iſaie and whi the Chriſte hymſelfe reherſed in the goſpell on this facyon. The people do honour me with theyr lyppis/ but the hart of them is farre from me. what anſwere wyll theſe people make to the hyghe iudge/ which dylygētly haue occuppyed ſuch thynges as perteyned to the fleſſhe and ſo longe tyme in them haue remayned / which ryng late to mattens/ & fynyſhe it ſo quikly peuyn as they do other houres They ſyt alſo muche longer/ at theyr dyners/ſuppers/feaſtes/bākettes/games/ playes/and dyſpoztes than nature neceſſyte oz reſon wold requyze. Verely full ſone they dyſpatche them ſelfe from all thynge that is godly / and conſernynge the welth of ſoules and at all tymes lede theyr lyf peruerſly. Therfoz let them repent and ſlake no moze the due tyme of the dyuyne ſeruyce of theyr maker / but ſuche principall and goſtly wordis / let them

them more princypally dylygently & tymely execute. Furdermore there be some regulars that syng nothyng at all/ notwithstandynge they stand in the quyer/ but they cōmaund and cōmyt it to chyldren and other syngers in the quyer. But that custome semyth to be a corruptyon of religion and no lawe/ and to procede of no humylyte or deuotion/but rather of pryd abusyon or hatered / where in tyme past not only the canons of cathedrall churches / but also the prelates themselfe were wont to synge with the quyer. Therfore let them marke what the apostle sayeth. He that labouryth not shal not eate. Is not the benefyce ordeigned for hym that doth the offyce / or deutye / for that cause the rentes of the church is due to none / but to such as do execute theyr offyces and labour in diuyne seruice.

¶ whether descante may be cōmendable in the dyuyne seruyce / and of certayne thynges whiche ought to be eschewyd in songe

The. xx. Article.

LIke as it is declared in a certayne boke namyd/ summa virtutū et vitiorum/ it is greatlye reprouid in syngynge the dyuyne seruyce to fayne a voyce to much quaueryng or warbelyng eyther for pride/vainglorye/or pleasure. For as saynt Gregorye sayth. whylste they fayne warblynge voyces/they let slyp all good deuocion/lykewyse in syngynge diuine seruyce ouermuche lowdenes and mountynge of the voyce is not comendable nor lykewyse the rollyng of it/nor also to much swyftnes or to dragge ouerlong at the latterēde/ꝛ to skyppe ouer the rest or pausinge in the myddes. And specyally when the song is so swyft that it is shakē all to nought. Moreouer a question may be mouyd whither descāt or breking of the voice may lawdably be sufferyd in goddes seruice/vpō that in ye said notable boke of summa it is wryten thus. Breakyng of the voice or descante semyth to be nothyng cōmendable in ye diuine seruice/wherupō it is redde in the legend of saīt Sebast. that ꝑsone is to be estemyd no right christian/which is in a maner weddid vnto the barbour/ which trīmeth his bushe/which sekith swete sauours/ꝛ breakyth his voice/for brekyng of the voyce semith to betoken a broken

mynde / euyn as the turnyng ĩ of the hed is nothyng cõendable vnto men/nor the great rollys of playtes in the garmẽtes of womẽ nomore is descãt vnto syngers. And lyke as the wynde is wonte to reyse vp great plentie of wauis & surges/euyn so the wynd of vanyte is the cause of all this quauers & surges in singyng/ these thyngs ar cõtaynid in the foresaid boke of summa / wherby it is ꝓuydyd yᵗ they that vse such maner of singyng/do vtter it for nothyng els but for theyr vainglory & wãtones of mynde which .ii. thyngs do cõsyst ĩ theyr nyce singig/ for yf it wer excusable or to be cõmẽdyd for any cause it shulde be onlie done for excyting & styrryng the people vnto deuocion/ for some folkys by reason of suche melodyes / ar greatly mouyd vnto contẽplacyõ & deuocion for which cause also organes ar vsid in the church . whereupon saynt Augustine sayeth . As often as the songe is more delectable vnto me/then the dite/so oftẽ I knowledge that I do synne penally/& then had I rather to here no song at al/furthermor although that descãt specially ꝓuokith some vnto deuociõ & heuẽly cõtemplacion/yet for al that it semith greatly to reuoke & let some frõ yᵉ minde of theyr owne prayours .

For god from whome nothynge vnlawfull douts hydden dothe not loke after the pleasauntnes of the voyce/but the puryte of harte.

¶ Ayenst some that wolde be excusid frō the obseruaūce of such thyngs that regulars/ar specyally boūden to do/sayenge that the dygnyte of the church requyreth none other facyon then hathe ben vsyd in tymes passyd.

DAuid the maker of Psalmis dyd not w^t out cause praye this prayer vnto god sayenge. Let not myne harte incline vnto the wordis of malignyte/for to inuente excusis in synne. Surelye this maner of excusynge causyth many to be vncorrigible & vnrulye. Let none therfore excuse hymselfe from the obseruaūce or keppyng of the thyngs before specyfied/sayeng. we can not lyue now a dayes/as our predecessours and elders haue lyued in tymes passyd(that is to wytte. For to be cōtentyd with necessarye

cessarye lyuynge/ syngle araye/ and one benefyce. But for the honestye/ and worthynes of the churche/ we haue nede of many moo thynges/ and we muste kepe hospytalyte/ and be clothed & fedde/ accordyng to the dygnyte of oure estate/ degree/ and ordre/ & to mayntayne good housholders vnto the whiche maner of excusis/ and suche lyke cauyllations/ and perswasions/ wherby many deceyue thēseluis and other to/ this aunswere may be made. Howe it is conuenient that religious persones/ and al other within holy orders/ shuld haue theyr lyuing/ theyr clothyng/ theyr mayntenaūce/ & kepyng after an honest sorte/ and accordynge to the degree that they ar callyd vnto/ and as it is cōuenyēt for theyr degree/ estate ordre/ and dygnyte. But wolde god they wolde substaunciallye/ and euynlye consydre/ what belongyth vnto theyr very honestie/ and to theyr conuenyent apparayll/ and furnyshynge. For whatsoeuer thyng is contrarie vnto vertue/ thesame is also contrarye vnto the true and commendable honesty. Forasmuch as goodnes & honestye (accordynge to the mynde of phylosophers and doctours) callyd so bycause of theyr owne nature and propertie

pertie they do allure intyse / & cause men to desyre them for theyr owne sake / & for none other respecte / as wysedom / science & vertue / lyke as the phylosopher wryteth in his fyrst boke (de anima) herevpō sayth Isodore / that honestie is asmuche to say as the state of honour / bycause honour is due vnto wysedom and vertue / & also vnto dignyte: which ought to be furnyshed with wysedom and vertue / is to be whatsoeuer therfore is contrarye vnto / wysedom and Vertue / stemyde vnhonest / and cōtrary vnto the perfytenes of lyuyng. wherfore the honestye of spirytual mynystres standith in holye and perfyte humylite: greate pacience: myldenes: obedience: charyte: all chastyte: dyligence / sobrenes / & gyuynge good example / true Justice / mercye / lyberalyte and other lyke vertues / gyftes / and gracys of the holy ghoste / in the despysynge of erthlye thynges / in the desyre and contemplacyon of heuenlye thynges / not in the excesse / and superfluyte / costlynes / curyosyte / delycatnes / and pleasure of appareyll / in mete: in drynke / and in sump-

tuos

tuos houses / not in royall housekeppyng in multeplyenge of ryches / and haboundaunce of householdestuffe & other lyke. For in suche maner of thynges the very dygnyte worshyp comlynes and honesty of ecclesiastiques doth stande as the Apostle witnessyth wrytynge vnto Tymothee / that woman shulde praye in conuenyent araye: meke: symple: and deuoute not in costlye: pompous: trymme: and ryche apparell: for the moste holye Chiefetayne of thapostles saith: be ye not clothyd with rych apparayll / and perlys. In this poynte therefore consysteth the very honestye and dygnyte of relygious persones and prestes that (asmoch as is possyble) they shall endeuour for to vse themselufs accordynge to the cõmaundemẽtes / decrees / rulys / tradycyons / and steppys of Christe: thapostles: and holye fathers. And so by gyuynge good example / Dyligence and / Spirituall conuersacyon they shall edefye the Vniernyd people & shalbe a good sauour vntogod / and shall glorysie god in perfyte lyuynge

and

and seruyng hym with all chastite/ sobernes/ and dilygence in doynge the diuyne seruyce/in simple & necessarye clothynge in charyte/deuocion/& the other vertues before touchyd. And in so doynge they shall obey / subdue / and conferme them selues vnto theyr prynce / theyr Lorde / theyr bishop/theyr master/theyr teacher and theyr iudge that is Jesu Christ/ for in euery ordre & degree there is one thig whiche is chief and superior/the whiche thyng is a rule and a measure of thyngs more lasse & inferiour / so that the more that they be lyke & conformable to theyr hed and superyour / they ar somuche the more perfyte in theyr proper nature & degree/ and the further that they vary and dyffer from it somuch the more vnperfit they be. Seynge therfore that Christe is the fyrste and chief hed measure and rule of al faithfull people that be of this congregacion or churche/ somuch the more ar all christen people to be estemyd good vertuos/ holy / and honest / in that they folowe Christe theyr hed in whom was all honestye/vertu and goodnes. Therfore the true honesty of spirituall mynystres consystyth in this poynte/which is to folowe Christes humylite / charite / iustice

iustice/good example/ mercye/ sobrenes/ clennes/ accordyng vnto the rulys/ and decrees of holye Fathers / not to fede theyr belyes delycatelye/ whereby they ar prouokyd vnto bodely luste / not to be arayed in gorgeous appareyll. But that they shulde be somuch the more vertuos/ holy/ sobre/ chast / and good/ in respecte of the laye people / as they ar set in more hygh estate and dygnyte. Moreouer it is prouyd by comon experiēce & teachyth that such relygyous persones as ar vertuos/ and chaste in theyr cōuersacion/ of which there is almost (the more pyte) as great plēte as is of whit crowes/ ar more set by/ more welbelouyd/ much better regardyd among the cōmune people/ then ar the other sorte. But how straytlye the superfluyte of goodes/ incōtynence of lyuynge/ and sumptuosnes of appareyll/ is forbydden vnto clerkys / is sufficientlye declaryd in the .xi. article wherin among other thynges it is conteynyd thus. All maner of starynge and gorgeous appareyll/ shuld not be vsyd among spirytuall persones wherfore it is veray mete that such byshopes and clerkes as cloth them selfys in trym costlye appareyll shuld be reformyd. For in tyme past such as were

of spirituall estate were contentyd with symple and mean aray. Finally the holy Apostles folowyd the same perfyte honestyy of theyr Mayster Christ wherof mencion is made before/whose example holy Bishopes with theyr clerkes did alwais folow not only durynge the persecucion of the churche/ but also longe syns both in the tyme of saynt Gregorie / and also of saynt Bernard what tyme holy churche was in much higher/and more glorypous estate then it is nowe/for the blyssed fathers before namyd dyd most vehemēt ly rebuke mynystres of the churche for theyr excesse/ superfluyte/curiositie/auarycc/ & vicyous lyuynge/affyrmyng that they ar specially bounden to be contētyd with symple fare/ and symple clothyng/ and other lyke vertues as ar spoken of before. Therfore let them not excuse thēselues from the obseruaunce of suche thynges / but rather applye themselues (asmuch as is possible) vnto vertuos lyuyng which is perfite honestyy according to ye rule that is expressyd in the begynnyng of the thyrd boke of decrees.

And further as they ar cōmaūdyd in the canons of holy fathers and hyge bishopes.

Of the

¶ Of the daūger that is in pluralyte of benefyces. ¶ we haue now declaryd sufficiently/how chast/how tymorous/and how sobre/all clerkes/relygions/and all that be within holy ordres/ ought for to be and in lyke maner howe they ar bounden to eschew all maner of pryde/ excesse and worldly pompe in theyr appareyll/ theyr stuffe/ and theyr houses/ and to be contentyd with symple fare/ and symple clothynge. whiche ordre yf they wolde observe/ vndoubtydly they myght lyue competently with a mean benefyce/ but forbycause they observe not the thynges before specifyd but wyl haue superfluyte of all thynges/as of ryches/of gorgeous apparell/ of sumptuous fare/ and suche lyke prouysyons lyke vnto tuslers/ and eyche men of the worlde/ no meruayle therfore yf they procure to haue many benefyces. But howe perylous it is to haue pluralyte of benefyces/ the true catholique/ and famous doctours afore namyd that is to wyte saynt Thomas/ wyllyam of parys/ Raymundus/ and the author of the boke callyd Summa Virtutum & Vitiorum/ and many other haue sufficyentlye declaryd/ out of

whose workis specially I haue gatherid this litle treatyse agaynst pluralite of benefices that now a dayes is euery where vsyd. But the effecte of theyr myndes cõsisteth in this pointe/that suche as haue moze benefices then one(except it be in certayne casys hereafter to be towchyd) do robbe god of his seruyce/ do dysmembze the church in dymynyshynge the iuste noumbze of her mynystres / do spoyle the pooze and the nedy of theyr almes / the dead soules of theyr suffrages / & fynally deceyue the good entente of theyr foundours and patrones. Seynge therfoze that contrary to the holsome counsell and wetrine of so many/and solemne doctours and holye fathers/ they haue & concepte to haue pluralite of benefices / they put themselues in great peryll(and to be playne)so dyng they cõmytte dead lye synne. Herupon wyliyam of Paris wrpteth in this wyse/verely the hauyng of spirituall possessions is very daungerous/whiche ought not to be gyuen/but only to such as deserue them/foz the whiche cause good and holye men haue ben daungerous to receyue them. And all yt myght be sauyd beside theyr necessary sustenãce/they vsyd to distribut vnto the

pooze

poore / to the entent they shulde supplye theyr defautes in prayeng & doyng good dedys / wherupon the holy father saynt Bernard sayeth / that a clerke hauynge suffycient aboue his necessarie chargys / and coueytynge to get more / is a church robber / and synneth damnably. Moreouer the sayd holy father saynt Bernard wrytyng to a certayne regular that had but one benefice howmuch so euer (sayth he) that thou dost retayne and kepe of yᵉ goodes of thy churche beside a symple and a competent fyndynge for thy selfe thinke it not thyne owne / but rather that it is stolen and robbed out of the church what thyng can be spoken more playnly or more terrybly? Ought not he to be estemyd blynde & past all grace that wyll not regarde / ne feare the wordis of these holy fathers. Now yf it be so meant / for the hauynge of one benefice / with howe many Theftys / Robberyes / Brybe-ryes and Sacrilege / ar they entangled / the whiche beynge not content with one benefice or two / wyll purchase vnyons / pluralitees / totquotes / ye hole hepes of benefices. Certaynlye yf accordynge to the mattiers before alledged / all that be in dedly synne / haue no right to yᵉ goods

of the church/nor yet to yᵉ worst benefice that is / then muste it be grauntyd that such as haue more benefices then one/ ar playne theuys and churcherobbers. And yf they alledge the dyspensacion of my lorde the Pope/ we knowe well ynough that his fatherhod can not dispēse with couetyse/ambicion/ pryde/and lecherye/ excepte it be his pleasure to vsurpe vpon the law of god/for yf it shulde be tryed in the court of conscience/ or before god. I dare boldely saye that his dyspensacyon myght not be allowyd without it were some vrgent cause/that is/yf it were on eyther for very necessyte/or for manyfest vtylyte/ whyche excusyth no man for the keppynge of many benefices / nor may be lawfully admytted / excepte it be in certayne casys hereafter to be touchyd.

Moreouer by the lawe of god we ought not to possesse more thempor all goodes/ then ar necessary for vs/hauyng regard vnto spyrytuall gyftes of grace and to our saluacion / that is to lyue well / and to obtayne the lyfe euerlastyng. If that hath one competent benefyce / I wolde know of hym/for what cause/what purpose & to what entent he wolde reteyne / or els go about to retayne any more / for eyther it must be to the entent for to ha-

ne habūdance of temporall goodes (whi
che is vnlaufull when one hath a fuffy-
cient lyuyng)orels for to lyue more fpiri-
tually/and to exercife charitable workis
and for to growe to further perfeccion /
whiche can not come that waye / for the
goodes that they get by hauyng manye
benefyces cauſith them to be more vn-
quiet / and troublyd in mynde / wherby
they haue great occaſion to lyue more
at pleaſure and vicioufly. Befydes this
wyllyam of Paris / and dyuerſe other
great clerkes do proue dyuers ways that
whoſoeuer hath pluralyte of benefices
(except it be in certayne caſys hereafter
to be touchyd)is bounden to faye as ma
ny payres of mattynes as he hath bene-
fices. And ſo he dothe daylye incurre as
many deadly fynnes / as he leuyth pay-
ers of mattynes vnſayed. The ſayd Do-
ctours alſo/ & many other affyrme/ that
whoſoeuer is in deadly fynne/he fynneth
deadly as he procurith to haue ſpiritual
goodz which ar apoynted for none other
but for ſuche as deſerue them/howe be it
there are certayne caſys where it is leful
to haue more benefices/ or prebendz then
one/ which after the myndes of dctours
ar ſuche as here folowe.

The fyrste is / where the benefyce is not
suffycient to fynde one preste his cõpetẽt
sustenaunce and clothynge. The secound
is/ where one benefice is annexyd to ano
ther. The thyrd is/ where there is defaut
and lacke of prestes. The fourth is yf the
church be appendãt to a prebẽde/ or such
lyke dygnyte. The fyfte is/ yf one haue a
iuste tytle to one benefice for a tyme / and
another in comendam vntyll the effecte of
the cause do ceasse. Also there maye be
added the syxte cause / whiche is/ yf one
be in seruice for the cõmune profite of yᵉ
churche as to be a preachour / or in lyke
office. wherfore according to the premyſ
ses/ it may be estemyd lightly how much
is sufficient for the reasonable lyuyng of
a clerke/ yf it be remembryd how they ar
bounden to lyue chastely/ sobrely/ mekely
moderatly: and gyuyng good example.
Ouer this we may lerne by experience yᵗ
small reuenues ar sufficient/ for suche as
vse the vertues before rehersyd/ howbeit
we do graunte that the greatter that a
clerke is in spirituall estate/ the greatter
benefyce he ought to haue. But pluralit=
te of benefices (excepte it be in the cases
be fore towchyd) is reprouyd of all good
men/ as beynge moste daungerous vnto
soule.

soule helthe/and therfore(accordynge to the councel of the doctours before alledgyd)it ought to be eschewyd of al ysones that entende the chrystian perfeccion.

Howe prestes and such as ar of the clergy / ar bounden to kepe hospitalyte.

HOwe agayne there be many of the clergy / that excuse the hauynge of many benefyces with this pretense. It behouith vs(saye they)to maynteyn good hospitalyte / ye & to make prouision for vnbydden gestes. wherfore to auoyde this colouryd cauyllacyon / I wyl partely declare/ vnto you what maner of hospitalite they ar bounden/ & that is none other but one of the workys of mercie wherof Christe sayth in his gospell that he wyll put vs in remembraunce at the daye of iugement/and wyll speake in this wyse. I was a straungier/ & ye wolde not take me in. The which he speakith in the persone of his membres/ and creatures/ the poore & the nedy / and not in the person of the riche and the myghty. At this sayenge of our sauyour ought all clerkys & mynystres of the churche specyallye to

tremble and quake whiche haue not her-
boroued nor fed the poore and nedy beg-
gars. what wyll they aunswere whiche
haue ben so negligent of the poore that
scarsely they can finde in theyr hartes to
rewarde them with the fragmentes of
theyr meate / or to afforde them lodginge
in theyr barnes. But yet they receyue
great astates/ryche men/ & officers/ with
much reuerēce: they intertayne thē with
moch solemnite/they refresh them delica
tely / and lodge them in softe beddynge.
Let them here/ and amende thē selfe/ &
endeuour to obserue that whiche Christ
cōmaundith in the gospell. when thou
makyst a feast(sayth he)do not cal ther-
unto thy kynsfolke/ nor ryche men/ or yt
be in authorite leste they recompense the
agayne for it in this worlde: but call the
poore / and the feble/ the blynde and the
lame / & so thou shalt be blessyd / for they
haue not to reward the/but thou shalt be
rewardyd/at the resurrecciō of the right
wise. Marke well this plaine sentence/
and [illegible] holsome councell. Notwith-
standinge these sayenges ar not so to be
vnderstōden but that spiritual possessio-
ners may lawfully at some tyme vpon a
reasonable cause maye kepe conuenyent
hospitalite

hospytalyte in makynge chere to theyr kysfolke/ and bylyke reason to such as be ryche & in authoryte/ so they vse it but seldom/ & without excesse & pompe/ and to a goodentent. Leste they do wrong to the poore: & passe measure: furthermore as it hath ben repetyd often here before/ the possessyons of the churche/ be the patrimony of Christ/ the almes of the poore/ the wages of theseruauntes of god. Therfore they ought to be conuertyd to suche vses and to none ohter. For saynt Hierom sayth. It is Sacriledge to bestowe the goodes of the poore vpon such as ar not poore. And in another place. They do synne deadly that bestow theyr goodes vpon ryche folke/ for they make oblacyon to the deuyll. And as it sayde before/ for to gyue the goods of the poore to such as ar not poore/ is playne sacrilege/ for the possessions of the church ar ye patrimony of ye poore/ & can not be detey ned frō thē but by thefte/ which is when the mynistrs of ye church kepe any more to them selues then theyr bare lyuynge. Therfore (as saynt Hierom sayth) that all suche as mysuse the goodes of the churche/ or that belongyth/ vnto the church bestowynge it in suche thynges/

as make

as make for theyr owne voluptuosnes & pleasure/be lyke vnto the scrybes & pharysees. They therfore that muccor vp ye goodes of the churche/ and purchase landes therwith for to leue vnto theyr frendes and kyndeswomen (I was about to haue sayed theyr sonnes & theyr doughters) or that bestowe it vpon vayne and worldly hospitalyte/ in theyr so doynge/ comytte deadly synne as to spend it vpon rych men or theyr carnall companyons/ for whom they make sumptuos prouysion/ and can neuer be mery without such gestys / or if they hap to be callyd by thē wyll come in all the haste to solace with them. Albeit that suche facions ar specyallye forbydden vnto the clergye accordyng vnto the sayeng of Isodore which saythe thus. Clerkes ought to eschewe feastis not only comune but also secrete/ and ought to fare meanly in sobrenes / for al such festyng is peryllo⁹ to Christē people for it both quenchyth deuocyon & distroyeth true cōtricion of hart/ & noury sheth lechery/ and drawith vnto it/ ydle wordes/iestyng/raylyng/wyldenes/ the forgettyng of good werkes and much vn gracyous pastyme. And so the feare of almyghty god neclectyd and set a parte/
the

the synfull men regarde slenderly bothe theyr soule helth. Therfore saynt Johā/ Chrysostom and suche holye men wolde neuer be bydden vnto feastes / nor lykewyse wolde byd any other. In consideracion wherof (O ye Christen prestes/and true mynistres of the church) these great daungerous/ often/ and delycat feastys. Remembre well/that a certayne prelate that was both rych and deuoute/mouyd with remorse of consciense by inspiracyon of God sayd these wordes here folowyng. I am made ryche in goodes/and am a beggar in soule. I haue won worldly honour and haue loste god. I folowe the courtes of prynces / and am of counsell with greate estates / and therby am bannyshed the courte of heuen. what shuld I speake of hospitalite/that rather ought to be callyd hostylite and moste of all yf it be don for vaynglorye / & not rather for the loue of Christe. For yf they hap to send for men of ryches or authorite/they receyue them with great honour and reuerence/ and spend on them ryght largely of the patrymonye of the crucyfixe. This is ye hospitalite of this world wherby rych men ar fed sumptuoslye to the glory of the dyuell/ and Chryste whi

che is

che is perfite charyte is afflycted with de
spisinges/ with hungre/ with strypes/ & with nakednes in his poore creatures/ for lo I lytle regardyng the terryble iu-gementes of god do syt amonge my ghe-stes as Balthazar/ mispedyng the good; and the treasure of the poore in the de-spyte of Christe. Under the colour of su-che false hospytalyte they make greate feast; to men of authorite/ & offycers (I had al moste sayd offenders) & then is all the chere loste/ and greate vnkyndnes taken except one syt with them/ and kepe companye in drynkynge/ and quas-synge tyll some of them be as dronke as beastes. ¶ The Judgement of suche thynges shalbe commytted vnto hym/ whose Judgement is secrete and ther-fore/ the more terryble inasmuche as the goodes that they mysbestowe ar not theyr owne. But ar the almes of the poore. Therfore as saynt Hierom sayth. It is great shame that the poore shulde be bannyshed out of the houses of spyry-tuall men/ and in the stede of them take rufiers/ & waytyng mynyons lyke vnto temporall prynces.

¶ The oblacyons of good people/ for nedy soules. The tythe of the poore/ and

of the

of the symple: and the exaccyons and oppressyons of the poore/ whiche rather ought to get theyr bread with the swet of theyr facys/ and not to haue myspendyd the Labours of good people in such vicyous plesures/ as in surfettynge and dronkenes/ to deuoure that other sweate for. ¶ He that beholdith the depenes/ and sytteth aboue Cherubyn shall determyne the causes of the Poore / when they shall stande boldely before hym/ agaynste them that haue wronged them and haue consumyd and myspent theyr goodes in euyll vses: and haue bestowyd vpon the ryche men/ wherfore they shall haue as great mede: as yf they had caste water into the see. Howe wyll they accomplyshe this sayenge of scripture. He hath dystrybuted and gyuen to ye poore. But that prelate whome we alledgyd before vnderstode this perfyghtly: for he sayd that huspytalyte which is a dede of charyte ought to be shewyd and don: not for vaynglory/ or any such carnall affeccion: but ought to procede from a good mynd and a vertuos entent. wherfore to conclude accordynge to the premysses: not only hospitalite but also al other charitable dedis & workꝫ of mercy aswel bo-

(dily as ghostely

ought to be exercysed of spiritual ꝑsones after theyr abylite lyberallye/ louingly: and deuoutly/but most of all they ought to gouerne theyr houses dyscretelye/and to edifye theyr housholde seruantes with good example gyuynge both in worde & dede/ and shulde rebuke suche as offende sharply and charitablye/vsynge themselues vnto all men vertuoslye/mekely/sobrely and iustlye.

¶ whither religious and men of the church that ar able to fynde thē-selues of theyr owne patrymony and substaunce may lawfully conuerte the goodz of the church vnto theyr owne vses.

ACcordyng to the myndes of saynt Augustyne & saynt Thomas/not onlye the wordys of our Mayster Christe but also of other holy fathers/ar of suffycient authorite to bynde vs to the folowynge of them wherfore we maye much better/and more surely giue credence vnto theyr sayenges/ then the perswasions of certayne schole men that truste

theyr

theyr owne wyttes ouermuch/ wrestyng the authorites of holye fathers / vnto theyr owne fantasye. And notwithstandyng that some of them: in the questyon before purposyd: alledge that it may be lawfully don. yet I thynke it more wyse dom to folow the authorite of saynt Hierom/sait Bernard & other holy fathers/ then them. Also Pope Damasus sayth/ that a clerke which is founden with the goodes of his frendes/ yf he take any of the church goodes/doth cõmytte playne sacryledg. And so doynge he eatyth and drynketh his damnacion. But yf he nedyth/ & then takyth / it is rather a gyfte then a takynge/ but yf he haue no nede & takyth/he stelyth. Lykewise Prosperus speakyth in this wyse. I can not well expresse/how great an offence they do commytte/ which when they ar able to haue of theyr owne/do charge ye church with theyr finding. And he sayth further that holy men dyd possesse the goodes of the churche not as possessioners but as procuratours/ and therfore they perceyuyng that the goodes of the church wer none other but the gyftes of god/ oblacyons for synnes/ & the inherytãce of the poore they dyd not challenge them as theyr

owne/but bestowyd them as thyngs bequethyd to the poore. And dyd not regard the hauynge of them/but kepte the not to themselues/but for other/nor dyd not procure to haue them with any couetous entēt/but vpon a good zeale to helpe other. Lo with howe greate reason these holy fathers perswade vs/ for such as ar able to lyue of theyr owne ar not accountyd/in the noumbre of the poore & nedy/for whome the goodes of the churche wer puyded. And therfore it is more wysedō to incline to the myndes of these holy fathers/then to such dreamers that do not only teach the contrary/ but also do lyue cōtrarye. But if they wyl obiecte agayne/ that the goodes of the churche belongē vnto the myuistres/ & that they ought to vse them as in rewarde of theyr seruice. To this it may be aunswerid/ that they ar the goods of none other/but of suche as nede them/ for yf the mynystres of the churche haue sufficient of theyr owne/and for all that wyll employ them to theyr owne vses/it is damnable and therfore they shulde be spent vpon the poore/ and the nedy for masmuche as temporall thynges ought to be vsyd

in charyta-

in charytable and ghostly workys: they shulde not bestow temporall goods other wyse then spiritually/that is when they be consumyd superfluosly/ where there is no nede/ lyke as one that is hole of body and lusty hath no nede of a Physicion/ but rather suche a one as is sycke & euyll at ease. wherfore those clerkes that be ryche haue no wronge/ though they lacke the profyttes of theyr temporalties/ for therby they meryte the heuynly rewardes and gyftes of grace/ which ar thousand tymes more to be desyred then temporall thynges. And fynally it apperyth by the authoritees here alledgyd in howe greate peryll they ar/ whiche hauynge sufficient of theyr propre goodes wyll maynteyne themseluys with benefices of the church/ spendynge all vpon theyr kynsfolke/ which after theyr degree ar able to lyue well ynough. And contrarie wyse they ar in as greate peryll that consume both patrymony and benefices raptously/and in carnal liuyng. And consequentlye these two articles do agree with the sayenge of the famous Clerke maister Johan Growt.

No goodes of the churche (sayth he) can be spend in feastyng and banketttes to ryche men/ but with deadly synne/ for they ar apoynted to the poore and ar Christes patrimonie/ and purchasyd for vs by the passion of Christe/ to our inheryteaunce/ wherfore we can not lawfully gyue thē to our owne frendes & kynsfolke/ onles they be poore and nede/ and that must be don only for Chrystes sake.

¶ what maner of man a prelate/ deane/ or any heed ruler of regulars ought to be.

IT is vniuersally knowen to be true/ as holy Dionisius techyth. That in euery estate/ degree & ordre the chyef or heed/ ought to be at ye tyme of his callyng of so great perfection/ that with ye abundaūce of his spirituall riches & vertue/ he myght inflame/ clence/ & illumynate/ such as be vnder hym & cause to lyue accordynge to the ordre & estate that they be callyd vnto. Therfor it appertyth that a deane/ or heed ruler/ ought especyally to be fulfillyd with al maner of vertuous exercise & obedience/ that (as it is sayd to apperteyne to regulars/ to ye entent that he may be an exāple/ to all his

regulars

regulars & other cõmytted to his gouer
naunce/ and that he may relygiously ex-
horte them/ledyng them the ryght way
to the effecte of theyr ordre/ both openly
and secretely informynge them with ver
tue/dyscretly correctyng suche as wolde
forsake theyr ordre/ & also y^t he may cau
se the seruice of god to be dewly kept & p-
formyd in the quyre/ and that al fables &
wyldnes may be eschewyd as wel in the
quyre/ as thorowe all the churche in the
tyme of diuine seruice. Nether he shal suf
fer any y^t be vnder his obedicẽce to play
the wantons: or to speke any incõuenyẽt
wordes. He must be ful of good crample
at all tymes/ yc & at the table (as moche
as he can) muste forbyd the eaters to vse
any vnlawfull cõmunycacion he muste
question with them of suche thynges as
wyll byld them in vertue/ abhorryng all
wordȝ inordinate/ studyeng & procurynge
with all his dylygens that theyr diuine
seruyce be holely/ dystynctly/ deuoutely &
reuerently performed and ended/ geuyng
them crãple in comynge oftentymes be-
fore them to theyr regular houres or ser
uyce. Furdermore (to his power) he must
erquisytly procure/ kepe and increase/ the
welth of his church especyally in spiritu

all thyngs / euermore feruently prayeng vnto almyghty god for them that be cõmyttyd vnto hym: to the entẽt that such thing as he can not fulfyl or obteigne by rebuke or correcciõ he may obteygne by praier/keping alwaies an honest meane bothe in his apparayle & also in his fare let hym gladly prepare hymselfe cõtynually to mynystre and celebrate But dyly gently let hym beware that he geue no euil occasion to any man by incõtinency or sklaũder/ or any other maner of wyse not only beynge chast and sobre/but also the exãple of chastite and sobrenes / and ferther the greater nomber that he must accõpt for vnto almyghty god/ the more meke ferefull & deuoute he ought to kepe hymselfe. And he that hath nede of much grace & fauour how much necessary is it/ that he be ful of mekenes and humylyte: howe incessantly ought the to embrace our sauyour Chryste. And conuenyently to shew hym selfe before god & man both in his wordes apparaile goyeng lyuyng and all his actes/pryde/ambytion/vaine glory / and auaryce haue vsyd to flarne our rulers & p̃lates of the church except they were well groũdyd & establysshed in the feare of god & deuoute excercyse.

In

In lyke maner where prelatz were wont to be meke and gentyl/now adayes they be comunly proude and malicyous. And some of them for fere or fauour of man or for some vyce rotyd in them felse wyll nothyng regard to fulfyl the correctyōs of thyr predecessours wherunto they be bounde as well of charyte as of dewe iustice but they loke more for theyr owne honour & priuate profit/than for the honour of god or welth of mās soule where in yf they ons wallow/they do nother regard the spiritual felycite of thyr subiectes nor yet of them selfe but blynded wt ambition and couetyse they fall hedlong into the depe dungynne of vice. Hereof saynt Bernard in his boke de Consideracione writyth to pope Eugenius in this wyse. Thou being a man shalt not desyer to haue domynacyon ouer another man lest al vnryghtwysnes haue dominacyon ouer the. For no poyson nor yet ponyshement ought to be more feryd of the than the desyre or plesure/or domynacō. wherupon saynt Gregory sayeth thus. The mynd of mā is proude ynough of it selfe ye although it be incoraged wt no power or p̄hemynēce/ than much rather a man wyl loke alofte whā p̄ferremēt is geuen

For truly as oftentymes as any prelate delyteth to be a maister & ruler ouer men so oft he fallyth in to the synne of apostasy. And who so delyteth in this world to haue preheminence/he shall not delyte to behold his iudge Christe. This folysshe pryde a prelate myght sone ouercome/yf wysely profundly & oftentymes he wold beholde and ponder ye terrible rigour of goddes iudgemēt/ especially cōcernyng prelates the extreme sharpnes of infernall ponyshment/& also the great negligence of theyr owne lyfe. So a prelate shall repute his dignite as it were a peyn full bourden / & not as it were a pryde & honour/& shalbe careful before god yf he marke the wordes of the apostle/whiche be these. It is a fereful thyng to fall into the handes of god lyuyng/ remēber therfore how enormē & damnable it is to gete any temporal comodyte or honoures by prelateship & not to fulfyll theyr dewe offices / nor yet to behaue thē lyke worthy ypcars of god.

¶ Agaynst theyr pryde in buyldyng

Synge(as Ulricus declaryth in his boke callyd Summa) that clerkes do make treasour of suche substance as remaynyth beyde theyr necessary & competent

cōpetent lyuyng / other expendyng it in vnlawful vses/as in makyng rych theyr frendz or kynsfolke/ or other fylthy ꝑsones wastyng & cōsumynge theyr money in gorgeous & delycate fare/getynge the fame of the worlde by great expensis/as geuyng liberall rewardis to gestours or mynstrelz/ byeng in the fauour or frendshyp of ryche & noble men encreasynge a superfluous houshold of seruaūtes whiche oftētymes must be renewid with costly apparaile or framig great curious & sumptuous buyldyngz / or els in such other lyke vses do prodigally expend the patrymony of Christ:me thynke in so doyng they do not only offend ī the synne of prodigalite as euery man doth that abusyth that thyng to his owne vse/ whiche is cōmyttyd to hym with charge/ but also they make theyr offence more greuo⁹ forbycause they do stele away so expendyd from thē that be the veray owners therof(that is to say)the poore people. Saynt Hierom callyth this synne a robbry exceding al cruelty of thefys: orels a sacriledge or church robbry/ furthermor saynt Augustin callyth it playnly manstauther/sayeng thus. whosoeuer immoderately reseruith to his owne vse goodz

by god dedicate vnto the poore/ is gylty of the slaughter of so many men/ as haue ben pore & dyed in theyr houses for hunger. These regulars therfore are bounde to restitucion of al such thigs. Such also as vnworthily haue receyued any goods of the church are bound to restitucion as horcs harlattes & bawdes & other fylthy persones of cuyll demeanour. Of these thynges spekyth viricus whose wordes in the treatyse agaynst pluralitees of benefyces more playnly do appere. Moreouer agaynst pryde in buyldynge certayne thyngs be rehersed in his boke callyd Summa virtutum et viciorum / in this maner. In buyldyng fyue thyngs be not to be cõmendyd. The fyrst is the multytude of houses / and that agreeth wyth the sayeng of the prophet Isaie in the .v. chapitre sayeng thus. wo may you be which ioyne to gether house vpon house Offenders be in the same case whiche folow not Christe sayeng thus. The sonne of man hathe no place where he may put his hed. The second thyng not to be cõmendyd in buildynge is the greatnes sumptuousnes and pleasauntnes therof. The pleasauntnes truly is dyscernyd in the colours and pictures therof. Of this

also it is spoken in the . xxii. chapiter of the prophet Jeremie. Fordermore saynt Paule the fyrst heremyte beyng vesyted of yt holy father Anthony/ asked a questyon whether chrysten men shuld folow the facyon of the gentyls in theyr sumptuous buyldyng or no/ and he harde say that ye. Than greatly he bewaylyd that vanyte consideryng hit was the part of a christen man to say on this facyon. we haue no dwellyng place in thys worlde but we do loke for a place in tyme to cum Therfore whatsoeuer regulars or myny steres of the churche do immoderatly expend in suche sumptuous buyldynges it is cruell robbry and sacriledge as byfore is sayde and also they are bound to restitucyon whiche restitucyon is to be done vnto poore people but for all that there be many nowe adayes whiche out of all good ordre and facyon do excede in such sumtuous and costly buyldynges.

¶ Of certayne auncyent lawes to auoyde pluralytees of benefyces vpon whome no dyspensacyon fallyth/ as touchyng to that is in them of the lawe naturall.

By the

By the meanes of large lyberal & vn reasonable dispẽsacions ye church is brought to great confusion/and surely in tyme past holy & fereful popes & bysshops dyd innowyse admyt but euermore prohybyte pluralitees of benefyces which now adayes euerywhere be graũted to one partycular person/yc & oftentymes to hym that nother by his cõuersacion or lernyng is worthy to haue one Therfore pope vrbane dyd institute that it shulde not be lawfull to any man to be inducte in to.v.churches but euery man to be regular & residẽt in one church only wherin he is inducte. Another institucion also is cõteigned in the decretals/ and that is this. A clerke frõ this ꝓsent tyme shall not be nombryd in.v.churches/for that is but a comodyte of marchaũdyse: or foule lucre/and the thyng that is most feree from the good ordre of the churche wherupon the decree of pope Gregori is thus. we cõmaũd that al benefices of ye church be comyttyd partycularly to particular psons. Furdermore sait Bernard alledged as sait Thomas dyd sayẽg thy One i pson is not one/but many i respect of benefices/therfor they shalbe many in respect of theyr ponyshemẽt for theyr offence

fence is greuous . Moreouer ☞ as here folowith. I wyll that who/so fortune to rede this shall knowe that I (frō the incarnacion of our lorde god.1437.)was at Paris/ where the honourable nopliā bishop there/ made a cōuocacion of al yᶜ maisters of the church/where a question was putforth of pluralite of benefices/ & by long & discrete disputaciō it was appuyd/that.ii.benefices wherof the one did amount vnto the value of. xb.pounds of paryse myght not be kept to yᶜ welth of mānes soule/& that this bishop of whom we speke before wᵗ many other wctours dyd fynally determyne. And this thyng is more plaily rehersed i the werke made against pluralyters of benefices/as touchyng this matter pope Gregori yᶜ. ix. beyng examyned whether by his power he myght dispēse with pluralite of benefices or no/he answerpd & sayd. I can dyspēse for nothyng of pluralites but only for the ponyshmēt of such as kepe many benefices/& therfor let no man reioyce yᵗ any man hath wᵗ hym dispensid for it is but in vayne/ but bothe the law of god & the lawe of nature is/that noman ought to coueyte or procure ony more tēporall goodes than is expediēt to vertuous lyfe or hathe

☞ thautho' of yᶜ boke of bees sayd.

or hathe respecte to spirytuall comodite or veray saluatyon. All these thynges which here I do breuely touch be more at large conteyned in the boke agaynste pluralyte of benefices. And veryly we ought muche rather to gyue credaunce vnto holy ferefull & famous doctours & to good relygious and weldisposed people (whome before we haue namyd for witnesses) than to suche as haue .ii. benefyces or mo/howe connyng so euer they seme to be. For in theyr owne matters they may gyue an euyll iudgment/as it apperyth by this prouerbe. Loue and hatered subuertyth euery iudgement.

¶ An exhortacyon vnto clerkes

The holy and moste deuoute father saynt Bernard sayeth as here folowyth. Let clerkes fere let maysters & prelates of ye church fere/which behaue them selfe so wyckedly in laudes of holy fathers wherin they dwell/nat beyng contentyd with a competent stypend or lyuyng that myght suffyse them but cruelly & theuysshly procuring & reteynyng superfluous possessions where with the pore people shulde be susteyned/ and the same expendyng into theyr owne carnall & vayne vse/offendyng with double iniquite/ for they do bothe spoyle other

men of theyr goodes/ and also abuse the holy and spirituall goodes & substance in theyr fylth and vanyte. Fauour I beseche ye/ fauour your seluys/ fauour the blode that was shed for your saluacyon. Beware of the horryble peryll and daunger of hell declyne from the euerlastyng fyre that is preparyd for you. Morne & lament ye in the myddys of Babylon that is to say in thys wretchyd worlde/ and saue your soules/ flee to the cytees of spiritual refresshing yᵉ is/ to veray religious cloystres that ye may do penaunce for your synnys past that ye may obtayne grace in thys present lyfe. Be nat slacke to knowledge your syn/ for where is aboundaunce of iniquite there hathe grace nede to be aboundaũt. Let nat the sharpnes of penaũce greue you/ for the penaũce of this world be nat cõdygne or able to coũteruayle our offences before comytted. Therfore in conclusyon S. Bernard sayth. If regulers & other constitute ĩ holy ordres be nat redy to enter in to relygion/ it shalbe sufficient for thẽ duely to walke & be cõuersaũt accordig to the effecte wherunto they be callyd/ or els after the forme and ordre to them publysshed expoundyd and commaundyd in the thyrde boke of Decretalles

Let them also cōsidre the vncertente/breuite & subtilte/of this present lyfe/the detestable fylthines of synne/the fauor and mercy of goddes maieste/ye p̄ciousnes of tyme that god to vs hath enlarged/ & ye it be not vnfruitfully expēdyd. Let vs loke also how fereful our iudgemēt is/ye and howe sharpe & intollerable the infernall ponyshemēt is for vs/yf(as god forbyd that we shuld so do) we lede our lyf in carnalyte and neglygēce. Therfor euery day let them examyne theyr cōsciences & remember the ende/that they may go by a narow & strayt way vnto saluation: let them ferefully vse the goodes of the churche/beyng euermore conuersaunt in chastite/sobrenes/deuotion. And good example vnto the tyme the charite of this present lyfe be cōsumid/& than by the mercy of god to be brought vnto the most blessyd fruitiō of euerlastyng felicite & ioyes of heuē to the great laude & prayse of god omnipotent whiche is the moste hygh & blyssed aboue all thynges. Amen.

¶ Impryntyd at London in the Fletestrete/by me Robert Redman: Cum priuilegio.